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Carità.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CATASTROPHE.



AMES BERESFORD was not brave. He was very kind and tender and good; but he had not courage to meet the darker emergencies of life. He felt as he rushed downstairs from his wife's presence that he had but postponed the evil day, and that many another dreadful argument on this subject, which was not within the range of arguing, lay before him. What could he say to her? He felt the abstract justice of her plea. A hopeless, miserable, lingering, loathsome disease, which wore out even love itself, and made death a longed-for relief instead of a calamity. What could he say when she appealed to him to release her from that anguish of waiting, and hasten the deliverance which only could come in one way? He could not say that it would be wicked or a sin; all that he could say was, that he had not the courage to do it—had not the strength to put her away from him. Was it true, he asked himself, that he would rather watch out her lingering agonies than

deprive himself of the sight of her, or consent to part with her a day sooner than he must? Was it himself he was thinking of alone, not her? Could he see her anguish and not dare to set her free? He knew that, in the case of another man, he would have counselled the harder self-sacrifice. But he, how could he do it? He rushed out of the house, through the afternoon sunshine, away to the first space he could find near, and struck across the open park, where there was no one to disturb him, avoiding all the pleasant walks and paths where people were. The open space and the silence subdued his excitement; and yet what could really bring him peace? He had no peace to look for—nothing but a renewed and ever-new painful struggle with her and with himself. Yes, even with himself. If she suffered greatly, he asked, with a shudder, how could he stand by and look on, knowing that he could deliver her? And would not she renew her prayers and cries to him for deliverance? God help him! It was not as if he had made an end of that mad prayer once and for ever by refusing it. It would come back—he knew it would come back—hour by hour and day by day.

Oh, how people talk (he thought) of such mysteries when the trouble is not theirs! He himself had argued the question often, in her hearing, even with her support. He had made it as clear as day to himself and to others. He had asked what but cowardice—miserable cowardice—would keep a man from fulfilling this last dread, yet tender service? Only love would dare it—but love supreme, what will that not do, to save, to succour, to help, to deliver? Love was not love which would shrink and think of self. So he had often said with indignant, impassioned expansion of the heart—and she had listened and echoed what he said. All this returned to him as he rushed across the dewy grass, wet with spring rains, and untrodden by any other foot, with London vague in mists and muffled noises all round. Brave words—brave words! he remembered them, and his heart grew sick with self-pity. How did he know it was coming to *him*? How could he think that this case which was so plain, so clear, should one day be his own? God and all good spirits have pity upon him! He would have bidden you to do it, praised you with tears of sympathy for that tremendous proof of love; but himself? He shrank, shrank, contracted within himself; retreated, crouching and slinking from the house. What a poor cur he was, not worthy the name of man; but he could not do it; it was beyond the measure of his powers.

When he turned to go home the afternoon light was waning. Small heart had he to go home. If he could have escaped anywhere he would have been tempted to do so; and yet he was on the rack till he returned to her. Oh, that heaven would give her that sweet patience, that angelical calm in suffering, which some women have. Was it only religious women who had that calm? He asked himself this question with a piteous helplessness; for neither he nor she had been religious in the ordinary sense of the word. They had been *good* so far as they knew how—

enjoying themselves, yet without unkindness, nay, with true friendliness, charity, brotherly-heartedness to their neighbours; but as for God, they had known little and thought less of that supreme vague Existence whom they accepted as a belief, without knowing Him as a person, or desiring to know. And now, perhaps, had their theory of life been different they might have been better prepared for this emergency. Was it so? He could not tell. Perhaps philosophy was enough with some strong natures, perhaps it was temperament. Who can tell how human creatures are moved; who touches the spring, and what the spring is, which makes one rebellious and another submissive, sweet as an angel? He had loved the movement, the variety, the indocility, the very caprice, of his wife, in all of which she was so much herself. Submission, resignedness, were not in that changeable, vivacious, wilful nature; but, oh! if only now the meekness of the more passive woman could somehow get transfused into her veins, the heavenly patience, the soft courage that can meet anguish with a smile. There was Cherry, his faded old maiden sister—had it been she, it was in her to have drawn her cloak over the gnawing vulture, and borne her tortures without a sign of flinching. But even the very idea of this comparison hurt him while it flashed through his mind. It was a slight to Annie to think that any one could bear this horrible fate more nobly than she. Poor Annie! by this time had she exhausted the first shock? Had she forgiven him? Was she asking for him? He turned, bewildered by all his dreary thoughts, and calmed a little by fatigue and silence, to go home once more.

It was getting dusk. As he passed the populous places of the park the hum of voices and pleasant sounds came over him dreamily like a waft of warmer air. He passed through that murmur of life and pleasure, and hurried along to the more silent stony streets among which his Square lay. As he approached he overtook Maxwell walking in the same direction, who looked at him with some suspicion. The two men accosted each other at the same moment,

"I wanted to see you. Come with me," said Beresford; and—"What is the matter? Why did you send for me?" the doctor cried.

Then Maxwell explained that a hurried message had come for him more than an hour before, while he was out, and that he was on his way to the Square now.

"Has there been any—change?" he said. After this they sped along hurriedly with little conversation. There seemed something strange already about the house when they came in sight of it. The blinds were down in all the upper windows, but at the library appeared Cara's little white face looking eagerly out. She was looking out, but she did not see them, and an organ-man stood in front of the house grinding out the notes of "*Ah che la morte*," upon his terrible instrument. Cara's eyes and attention seemed absorbed in this. James Beresford opened the door with his latchkey unobserved by any one, and went upstairs direct, followed by the doctor, to his wife's room.

How still it was! How dark! She was fond of light, and always had one of those tall moon-lamps, which were her favourites; there was no lamp in the room, however, now, but only some twinkling candles, and through the side window a glimmer of chill blue sky. Nurse rose as her master opened the door. She gave a low cry at the sight of him. "Oh, don't come here, sir, don't come here!" she cried.

"Is she angry, still angry?" said poor Beresford, his countenance falling.

"Oh, go away, sir; it is the doctor as we wanted," said the woman.

Meantime Maxwell had pushed forward to the bedside. He gave a cry of dismay and horror, surprise taking from him all self-control. "When did this happen?" he said.

James Beresford pressed forward too, pushing aside the woman who tried to prevent him; and there he saw—what? Not his wife: a pale, lovely image, still as she never was in her life, far away, passive, solemn, neither caring for him nor any one; beyond all pain or fear of pain. "My God!" he said. He did not seem even to wonder. Suddenly it became quite clear to him that for years he had known exactly how this would be.

Maxwell put the husband, who stood stupefied, out of his way; he called the weeping nurse, who, now that there was nothing to conceal, gave free outlet to her sorrow. "Oh, don't ask me, sir, I can't tell you," she said among her sobs. "Miss Carry rung the bell and I came. And from that to this never a word from her, no more than moans and hard breathing. I sent for you, sir, and then for the nearest as I could get. He came, but there was nothing as could be done. If she took it herself or if it was give her, how can I tell? Miss Carry, poor child, she don't know what's happened; she's watching in the library for her papa. The medicine-box was on the table, sir, as you see. Oh, I don't hold with them medicine-boxes; they puts things into folk's heads. The other doctor said as it was laudanum, but if she took it, or if it was give her——"

Mr. Maxwell stopped the woman by a touch on her arm. Poor Beresford stood still there, supporting himself by the bed, gazing upon that which was no more his wife. His countenance was like that of one who had himself died; his mouth was open, the under-lip dropped; the eyes strained and tearless. He heard, yet he did not hear what they were saying. Later it came back to his mind; at present he knew nothing of it. "God help him!" said the doctor, turning away to the other end of the room. And there he heard the rest of the story. They left the two together who had been all in all to each other. Had he given her the quietus, he who loved her most, or had she taken it? This was what neither of them could tell. They stood whispering together while the husband, propping himself by the bed, looked at her. At her? It was not her. He stood and looked and wondered, with a dull aching in him. No more—he could not go to her, call her by her name. A dreary, horrible sense that this still figure was some one else, a something

new and unknown to him, another woman who was not his wife, came into his soul. He was frozen by the sudden shock; his blood turned into ice, his heart to stone. Annie! oh, heaven, no; not *that*; not the marble woman lying in her place. He was himself stone, but she was sculptured marble, a figure to put on a monument. Two hours of time—light, frivolous, flying hours—could not change flesh and blood into *that*; could not put life so far, and make it so impossible. He did not feel that he was bereaved, or a mourner, or that he had lost what he most loved; he felt only a stone, looking at stone, with a dull ache in him, and a dull consternation, nothing more. When Maxwell came and took him by the arm he obeyed stupidly, and went with his friend, not moving with any will of his own, but only because the other moved him; making no “scene” or terrible demonstrations of misery. Maxwell led him downstairs, holding him by the arm, as if he had been made of wood, and took him to the library, and thrust him into a chair, still in the same passive state. It was quite dark there, and Cara, roused from her partial trance of watching at the window, stumbled down from her chair at the sight of them, with a cry of alarm, yet relief, for the lamps outside had beguiled the child and kept her from perceiving how dark it had grown till she turned round. No one had thought of bringing in the lamp, of lighting the candles, or any of the common offices of life in that house where Death had so suddenly set up his seat. The doctor rang the bell and ordered lights and wine. He began to fear for James: his own mind was agitated with doubts, and a mingled severity and sympathy. He felt that whatever had happened he must find it out; but whatever had happened, how could he do less than feel the sentiment of a brother for his friend? He did not take much notice of the child, but stooped and kissed her, being the friend of the house, and bade her go to her nurse in a softened tender tone. But he scarcely remarked that Cara did not go. Poor child, who had lost her mother! but his pity for her was of a secondary kind. It was the man whom he had to think of—who had done it, perhaps—who, perhaps, was his wife’s innocent murderer—yet whom, nevertheless, this good man felt his heart yearn and melt over. When the frightened servant came in, with red eyes, bringing the wine, Maxwell poured out some for the chief sufferer, who sat motionless where he had placed him, saying nothing. It was necessary to rouse him one way or other from this stupefaction of pain.

“Beresford,” he said curtly, “listen to me; we must understand each other. Is it you who have done this? Be frank with me—be open. It is either you or she herself. I have never met with such a case before; but I am not the man to be hard upon you. Beresford! James! think, my dear fellow, think; we were boys together; you can’t suppose I’ll be hard on you.”

“She asked me—she begged of me,” said Beresford slowly. “Maxwell, you are clever, you can do wonders.”

"I can't bring those back that have gone—*there*," said the doctor, a sudden spasm coming in his throat. "Don't speak of the impossible. Clever—God knows! miserable bunglers, that is what we are, knowing nothing. James! I won't blame you; I would have done it myself in your place. Speak out; you need not have any reserves from me."

"It isn't that. Maxwell, look here; they've spirited my wife away, and put *that* in her place."

"God! he's going mad," said the doctor, feeling his own head buzz and swim.

"No," was the answer, with a sigh. "No, I almost wish I could. I tell you it is not her. You saw it as well as I. That my wife? Maxwell—"

"It is all that remains of her," said the doctor sternly. "Mind what I say; I must know; no more of this raving. Did you do it? Of course she asked you, poor soul!" (Here the doctor's voice wavered as if a gust of wind had blown it about.) "She never could endure the thought of pain; she asked you—it was natural: and you gave her—opium?"

"Nothing. I dared not," he said, with a shiver. "I had not the courage. I let her plead; but I had not the courage. What! put her away from me, willingly? how could I do it? Yes, if she had been in a paroxysm; if I had seen her in agony; but she was calm, not suffering, and she asked me to do it in cold blood?"

"What then?" The doctor spoke sternly, keeping the tone of authority to which in his stupefied state poor Beresford appeared to respond. Cara from a corner looked on with wide-open eyes, listening to everything.

"Nothing more," he said, still sighing heavily. "It was more than I could bear. I rushed away. I went out to calm myself—to try and think; and I met you, Maxwell; and now —"

He lifted his hands with a shuddering gesture. "That is all—that is all! and this desolate place is my—home; and *that* is—Annie! No, no! Maxwell, some of your doctors—your cruel doctors—have taken her away to try their experiments. Oh, say it is so, and I'll thank you on my knees."

"Be quiet, Beresford! Try and be a man. Don't you see what I have got to do? If it was not your, it was herself. I don't blame her, poor soul, poor soul! the thought of all she had to go through made her mad. Be silent, man, I tell you! We must not have her branded with the name of suicide, James," cried the doctor, fairly sobbing. "Poor girl, poor girl! it is not much wonder if she was afraid; but we must not let them say ill of her now she is gone. I remember her before you married her, a lovely creature; and there she is, lying—but they must not speak ill of her. I'll say it was — Yes, if it's a lie I can't help that—my conscience will bear it—there must not be talk, and an inquest. Yes, that's what I'll say."

"An inquest!" said the wretched husband, waking up from his stupor with a great cry.

"I'll take it upon myself," said Maxwell, going to the writing table. Then he saw Cara leaning out of her chair towards them with great strained wide-open eyes.

"Cara! have you heard all we were saying?"

"I don't understand, I don't understand!" said the child with sudden sobs. "What have you done to my mamma?"

The door of the library opened softly, and they all started as if at the approach of a new calamity.

"If you please, sir," said John, addressing Maxwell with natural recognition of the only source of authority, "I came to see if you wouldn't have some dinner—and master—"

With a moan, Beresford hid his face in his hands. Dinner must be, whosoever lives or dies—if the world were breaking up—if hope and love had failed for ever. John stood for a moment against the more powerful light of the gas in the hall, for his answer, and then not getting any, he had the grace to steal quietly away.

But this wonderful intrusion of the outer ordinary life disturbed the melancholy assembly. It roused Beresford to a sense of what had befallen him. He got up and began to pace up and down the long room, and Cara's sobs broke the silence, and Maxwell at the table, with a spasm in his throat, compiled the certificate of the death. In what medical form he put it I cannot tell; but he strained his conscience and said something which would pass, which nobody could contradict; was not that enough? "I hope I may never do anything more wicked," he said, muttering to himself. The nurse came to call the child, which was the first thing that had seemed natural to Cara in the whole miserable day's proceedings. She did not resist the command to go to bed, as they had all resisted the invitation to dine. She got up quickly when nurse called her, glad of something she was used to.

"It's the only place as we're all fit for," said nurse, with a sigh of weariness; "your poor papa, Miss Carry, as well as the rest." Then she turned to the gentlemen with a touch of natural oratory. "What is the use of talking," she said; "I'm one as has loved her since first she drew breath. She was my child, she was; and look you here, I'm glad—her old nurse is glad. I'll not cry nor make no moan for her," said nurse, the tears running down her cheeks. "I'd have give her that dose myself if the darling had asked me; I would, and never have trembled. I'd have done it and stood up bold and told you I done it, and I don't blame her. She's seen what it was, and so have I."

"Nurse, you are a good woman," said the doctor, coming hastily forward and grasping her hand. "Nurse, hold your tongue, and don't say a word. Don't let those idiots talk downstairs. I'm ready to give them the reason of it whoever asks. I did not know it would come on so quick when I left to-day; but I know what it is that has carried her off. It was to be expected, if we hadn't all been a parcel of fools."

Nurse looked him anxiously in the face. "Then it wasn't—it

wasn't?— Ah!" she added, drawing a long breath, "I think I understand."

"Now, hold your tongue," he said curtly, "and stop the others. You are a sensible woman. My poor little Cara, good-night."

"Don't speak to him," nurse whispered, drawing the child away. "Leave your poor papa alone, darling. God help him, he can't say nothing to you to-night. Here's Sarah coming to put you to bed, and glad I'd be to be there too: it's the only place as we're fit for now."

Sarah, who was waiting outside, had red eyes overflowing with tears. She hugged the little girl and kissed her, bursting out into fits of subdued crying. But Cara's own sobs were stilled and over. Her head ached with bewildering pain; her mind was full of confused bewildering thoughts.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONSOLATION.

"THIS is indeed an affliction, dear Miss Beresford. We came up directly we heard of it; I would not let a moment pass. Oh, how little we know! We were thinking of your poor niece as having returned from her foreign tour; as being about to enter upon the brilliant society of the season. I don't know when I have received such a shock; and my poor Maria, her feelings were almost beyond control; but she would not stay away."

"I thought she would come," said Miss Charity. "Maria always likes to get news from the fountain-head, and to see how people are bearing their troubles. Yes, my dear, I am bearing mine very well, as you see. Poor Annie! she was only my niece by marriage after all. At my age one sees even one's own nieces, women with families, die without great trouble. It may sound hard, but it's true. When a woman is married, and has her own children about her, you can't but feel that she's less to you. It's dreadful for *them*; but, so far as you are concerned, you lost her long ago."

"Oh, dear Miss Beresford, you like to pretend you are calm, to hide how soft-hearted you are. But we know you better than that. I myself, though I knew (comparatively) so little of poor Mrs. James——"

"And I thought you did not like each other, so it is all the more kind of you to cry. Cherry will cry too as much as you please, and be thankful for your sympathy. Have you had a pleasant walk? I think the primroses are thicker than ever this spring. We have been sending up basketsfull. She was fond of them——" Here the old lady faltered for a moment. This was the kind of allusion that melted her, not straightforward talk. She was in profound black, a great deal more crape than the dressmaker thought at all necessary, but Miss Charity had her own views on these subjects. "Put double upon me,

and take it off the child," she had said, to the wonder of the tradespeople, who felt that the mourning for a niece by marriage was a very different thing from that which was required for a mother. Mrs. Burchell respected her greatly for her crape. She knew the value of it, and the unthriftiness, and felt that this was indeed showing respect.

"We heard it was very sudden at last," said the Rector, "that nobody had the least idea—it was a very lingering disorder that she was supposed to have? So we heard, at least. Do you happen to know how the doctors accounted for its suddenness at last? There is something very dreadful to the imagination in so sudden a death."

"I wish I could think I should have as quick an end," said Miss Charity; "but we Beresfords are strong, and die hard. We can't shake off life like that. We have to get rid of it by inches."

"My dear lady," said the Rector, "I don't mean to say that I would put any trust in deathbed repentances; but surely it is a privilege to have that time left to us for solemn thought, for making sure that we are in the right way."

"I never think much when I am ill, my dear Rector; I can't. I think why the flies buzz so, and I think if I was Martha it would make me unhappy to have such a red nose; and if you came to me, instead of listening to what you said, I should be thinking all the time that your white tie was undone" (here the Rector furtively and nervously glanced down, and instinctively put up his hand to feel if the remark was true) "or your coat rusty at the elbows. I say these things at a hazard, not that I ever remarked them," she added, laughing. "You are tidiness itself."

The Rector was put out by these chance possibilities of criticism, and could not but feel that Miss Charity's quick eyes must have seen him with his white tie untidy, loosely unfastened, under his beard. He had grown a beard, like so many clergymen, and it was not an improvement. Instead of looking clean, as he once did, he looked black and coarse, a mixture of sea-captain and divine. He kept putting up his hand stealthily all the time he remained, and inviting his wife, with nervous glances, to let him know if all was right. Unfortunately he could not see it under the forest of black beard.

"We heard," said his wife, coming to his relief, "that there was something about an opiate—an over-dose, something of that sort—that poor Mrs. James had taken it without measuring it, or—you know how everything is exaggerated. I was quite afraid, and so glad to see the death in the paper without any inquest or formalities of that kind, which must be so painful. Was there really nothing in the story of the opiate? It is so strange how things get about."

"I don't think it at all strange, Maria. The servants call in a strange doctor, in their fright, who does not know anything about her case or temperament. He hears that she has to take some calming drops to relieve her pain, and of course he jumps in his ignorance to the idea of

an over-dose. It is the fashionable thing now-a-days. It is what they all say—"

"And there was *no* truth in it?"

"None whatever," said Miss Charity, who, safest of all advocates, implicitly believed what she was saying, not knowing that any doubt had ever existed on the subject. She sat facing them in her new mourning, so freshly, crisply black. Miss Charity knew of no mystery even, and strengthened the delusion with all the genuine force of truth.

The Rector and his wife looked at each other. "It shows that one should not believe the tenth part of what one hears," he said. "I was told confidently that poor Mrs. James Beresford held strange ideas about some things."

"That you may be quite sure of, Rector. I never knew any one yet worth their salt who did not hold odd ideas about something—"

"Not about fundamentals, my dear lady. I am not straitlaced; but there are some matters—on some things, I am sure, none of us would like to give an uncertain sound. Life, for example—human life, is too sacred to be trifled with; but there is a set of speculatists, of false philosophers—I don't know what to call them—sceptics, infidels they generally are, and at the same time radicals, republicans—"

"Ah, politics? I daresay poor Annie was odd in politics. What did it matter? they were not political people. If James had been in Parliament, indeed, as I should like to have seen him—but unfortunately he was a man of fine tastes: that is fatal. A man of fine tastes, who is fond of travelling, and collecting, and rapt up in his wife, will never become a public man, but I should like to have seen James in Parliament. Strange ideas, oh yes, queer to the last degree. If there is anything worse than republicanism (is there?) I should think poor Annie went in for that."

"That is bad enough, but it is not exactly what I meant," said the Rector; and then he rose up with an air of the deepest conventional respect. "My dear, here is your kind friend, Miss Cherry," he said.

Mrs. Burchell sprang up at the intimation, and rushed forward with open arms. She had put on a black merino dress instead of her usual silk, and a black shawl, to mark her sense of the calamity—and swallowed up poor alim Miss Cherry in the entanglements of that embrace, with solemn fervour. Cherry had not much sense of humour, and she was too good to pass any judgment upon the sudden warmth of affection thus exhibited; but it was a little confusing and suffocating to find herself without any warning engulfed in Mrs. Burchell's old merino and the folds of her shawl.

"Oh, my dear, dear Cherry, if I could but tell you how I feel for you! How little did we think when we last met:—"

"You are very kind," said Miss Cherry, drawing herself forth somewhat limp and crushed from this embrace. "I am sure you are very kind." Her lips quivered and the tears came to her eyes; but she was not so

overwhelmed as her consoler, who had begun to sob. "It is my poor brother I think of," said Miss Cherry. "It is little to us in comparison with what it is to him. I think of him most; more than of poor Annie, who is safe out of all trouble."

"We must hope so, at least," said the Rector, shaking his head, and his wife stopped sobbing, and interchanged a glance with him, which was full of meaning.

"Poor Mrs. James! It was so sudden. I fear there was no time for preparation—no time even for thought!"

"Men soon get the better of these things," said Miss Charity, "and the more they feel it at the time the more easily they are cured. Cherry there will think of her longer than her husband will. I don't mean to say your grief's so great, my dear, but it will last."

"Oh, aunt, you do James injustice. He thought of nothing but Annie. The light of his eyes is gone, and the comfort of his house, and all he cares for in life."

Here poor Miss Cherry, moved by her own eloquence, began to cry, picturing to herself this dismal future. Nothing at Sunnyhill was changed: the room was as full of primroses as the woods were; great baskets of them mingled with blue violets filled every corner; the sunshine came in unclouded; the whole place was bright. It struck the tender-hearted woman with sudden compunction: "We are not touched," she said; "we have everything just the same as ever, as bright; but my poor James, in that house by himself; and the child! Oh, Aunt Charity, when I think of him, I feel as if my heart would break."

Miss Charity took up her work and began to knit furiously. "He will get over it," she said, "in time. It will be dreadful work at first; but he will get over it. He has plenty of friends, both men and women. Don't upset me with your talk; he will get over it—men always do."

"And let us hope it will lead him to think more seriously," said Mrs. Burchell. "Oh, I am sure if you thought my dear husband could be of any use—we all know he has not been what we may call serious, and oh, dear Miss Beresford, would not this affliction be a cheap price to pay for it, if it brought him to a better state of mind?"

"His wife's life? It would be a high price for any advantage that could come to him, I think. Dry your eyes, Cherry, and go and put on your bonnet. This is Mr. Maxwell's day, and you had better go back to town with him."

"Was it Mr. Maxwell who attended poor Mrs. James? I hope he is considered a clever man."

"How oddly you good people speak. Do you want to insinuate that he is not a clever man? He takes charge of my health, you know, and he has kept me going long enough. Eh! yes, I am irritable, I suppose; we are all put out. You good quiet folks, with all your children about, nothing happening to you——"

"Indeed, Miss Beresford, you do us great injustice," said Mrs.

Burchell, stung, as was natural, by such an assertion, while the Rector slowly shook his head. "We do not complain; but perhaps if we were to tell all, as some people do. Nothing happening to us!—ah, how little you know."

"Well, well, let us say you have a great many troubles; you can feel then for other people. Ah, here is Mr. Maxwell. Don't talk of me now; don't think of me, my good man. I am as well—as well—a great deal better than a poor useless woman of nearly threescore and ten has any right to be when the young are taken. How is James?"

The doctor, who had come in by the open window with a familiarity which made the Rector and his wife look at each other, sat down by the old lady's side and began to talk to her. Miss Cherry had gone to put on her bonnet, and by-and-by Mr. and Mrs. Burchell rose to take their leave.

"I am so glad to hear that, sad as it was, it was a natural death, and one that you expected," said the Rector, taking Maxwell aside for a moment.

The doctor stared at him, with somewhat fiery eyes. "A natural death? Mrs. Beresford's? What did you expect it to be?"

"Oh, my dear sir, I don't mean anything. We had heard very different accounts—so many things are said—"

"You should put a stop to them then," said the other, who was not without temper, and he and Miss Charity paused in their sudden talk as the visitors disappeared, to interchange some remarks about them which were not complimentary.

"What they can mean by making up such wicked lies, and putting a slur upon her memory, poor child!" said the old lady with a sudden gush of hot tears.

The doctor said something very hotly about "meddlesome parsons," and hastily plunged again into descriptions of poor James. The other was not a subject on which he could linger. "I never saw a man so broken-hearted; they were always together; he misses her morning, noon, and night. Cherry must come to him; she must come at once," he said, forgetting how long it was since he had spoken of Cherry before by her Christian name. But Miss Charity noticed it with the keen spectator instinct of her age, and ruminated in an undercurrent of thought even while she thought of "poor James," whether Maxwell's faith in Cherry "meant anything," or if new combinations of life might be involved in the sequences of that death scene.

The same thought was in the minds of the clerical pair as they went down the hill. "Will *that* come to anything?" they said to each other.

"It is a nice little property," said the Rector, "and I suppose she will have everything."

"But if I was Cherry," said Mrs. Burchell, "I should not like to be thrown at his head in that very open way. Going with him to town! It is as good as offering her to him."

"She is no longer young, my dear," said the Rector, "and people now-a-days have not your delicacy."

"Oh, I have no patience with their nonsense!" she cried; "and their friendships, forsooth—as if men and women could ever be friends!"

And it is possible that in other circumstances Miss Cherry's tranquil soul might have owned a flutter at thought of the escort which she accepted so quietly to-day; but she was absorbed with thoughts of her brother and of the possible use she might be, which was sweet to her, notwithstanding her grief. Miss Charity shook her head doubtfully. "It is not Cherry that will help him," she said, "but the child will be the better of a woman in the house."

Really that was what Mr. Maxwell wanted, a woman in the house; something to speak to, something to refer everything to; something to blame even, if things were not all right. The funeral was over, and all that dismal business which appals yet gives a temporary occupation and support to the sorrowful. And now the blank of common life had recommenced.

"Perhaps she will not help him much; but she will be there," said the doctor. He was glad for himself that a soft-voiced, soft-eyed, pitying creature should be there. There was help in the mere fact, whatever she might say or do.

Cara had been living a strange life through these melancholy days. She had not known, poor child, the full significance of that scene by her mother's bedside, of which she had been a witness. She did not fully understand even now; but glimmers of horrible intelligence had come to her during that interview in the library, and the things she had heard afterwards from the servants had enlightened her still more. She heard the whispers that circulated among them, terrified whispers, said half under their breath. That she had done it herself—that she knew, poor dear, what she was doing—that if anything had been known, there would have been an inquest, and things would have come out. This was what Cara heard breathing about in half whispers, and which filled her with strange panic, lest her secret should escape her. She knew the secret, and she only. Nobody had questioned her, but the child's impulse to tell had bound her very soul for days after. She had resisted it, though she had felt guilty and miserable to know something which no one else knew; but she had kept her secret. "Don't let us brand her with the name of suicide." These words seemed to ring in her ears night and day. She repeated them over and over to herself. "Don't let us brand her with the name of suicide."

"No, no," poor Cara said to herself, trembling; "no, no:" though this premature and horrible secret weighed down her heart like a visible burden. Oh, if she could but have told it to nurse, or to Aunt Cherry; but she must not, not even to papa. When her aunt arrived, it was mingled torture and relief to the poor child. She clung round her with sobbing, longing so to tell; but even to cling and to sob was consolatory,

and Aunt Cherry wanted no explanation of that unusual depth of childish distress. "Cara was not like other children," she said to herself. She had feelings which were deeper and more tender. She was "sensitive," she was "nervous." She was more loving than the ordinary children, who cry one moment and forget the next. And kind Cherry, though her own grief was of the milder, secondary kind, as was natural, had always tears of sympathy to give for the grief of others. She took the little girl almost entirely into her own care, and would talk to her for hours together; about being "good," about subduing all her little irritabilities, in order to please mamma, who was in heaven, and would be grieved in her happiness to think that her child was not "good." Cara was greatly awed and subdued by this talk. It hushed her, yet set her wondering; and those conversations were sometimes very strange ones, which went on between the two in their melancholy and silent hours.

"Does everybody go to heaven who dies?" said Cara, with awe-stricken looks.

Miss Cherry trembled a little, having some fear of false doctrine before her eyes. "Everybody, I hope, who loves God. There are bad people, Cara; but we don't know them, you and I."

"Who love God; but I never think of God, Aunt Cherry. At least, I do now; I wonder. But if they did not do that, would they still go to heaven all the same?"

"God loves us, dear," said Cherry, with the tears in her soft eyes. "Fathers and mothers love their children, whether their children love them or not. That is all we know."

"Whatever they do? if they even laugh, and go wrong? Yes," said Cara, very thoughtfully, "I suppose papa would not send me away, out into the dark, if I did ever so wrong."

"I am sure he would not; but you must not think of such things, dear; they are too difficult for you. When you are older, you will understand better," Cherry said, faltering, and with something in her heart which contradicted her; for did not the child "understand" better than she?

Then Cara started another difficulty, quite as appalling; facing it with innocent confidence, yet wonder: "What sort of a place," she asked softly, looking up with her blue eyes full of serious faith and awe, "is heaven?"

"Oh, my dear," said Miss Cherry, "you ask me what I would give all I have in the world to know. There are so many whom I love there."

"But what do you *think*? Often when one doesn't know, one has an *idea*. I don't know Italy, or India; but I imagine something. Aunt Cherry, tell me what you think."

"Oh, Cara, my darling, I don't know what it is *like*. I know there is no trouble or pain in it; and that God is not so far off as here. No, He is not far off here; but we can't see Him; and we are such poor

dull creatures. And I *think*, Cara, I *think* that our Lord must be always about there. That people may go and stand on the roadside and see Him pass, and talk to Him, and be satisfied about everything."

"How—be satisfied about everything?"

"Oh, child! I should not want anything more. He sees both sides, my darling, both here and there, and understands. I am sure they must be able to speak to Him, and go to Him, whenever they will——"

This thought brought great tears, a suffusion of utter wistfulness yet heart-content to Cherry's eyes. Little Cara did not know very well what was meant by such words. She did not understand this conception of the great Creator as a better taught child might have done. But she said to herself, all secretly, "If there is One like *that*, whether it is in heaven or earth, I might tell Him, and it would be no harm."

While Miss Cherry dried her eyes, her heart lightened by that overflowing. Perhaps, though they had not seen him, He had passed that way, and heard the babble—what was it more?—between the woman and the child.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HILL.

AFTER this a long interval passed, which it is needless to describe in detail. Five years is a long time in a life; how much it does! Makes ties and breaks them, gives life and withdraws it, finds you happy and leaves you miserable, builds you up or plucks you down; and at the same time how little it does! Buffets you, caresses you, plays at shuttlecock with you; yet leaves you the same man or woman, unchanged. Most of this time James Beresford had spent in absences, now here, now there; not travels according to the old happy sense, though in a real and matter-of-fact sense they were more travels than those he had made so happily in the honeymooning days. But he did not like to use the word. He called his long voyages absences, nothing more. And they were of a very different kind from those expeditions of old. He avoided the Continent as if pestilence had been there, and would not even cross it to get the mail at Brindisi, but went all the way round from Southampton when he went to the East. He went up the Nile, with a scientific party, observing some phenomena or other. He went to America in the same way. He was not a very good sailor, but he made up his mind to that as the best way of fighting through those lonely years. Once he went as far north as any but real Arctic explorers, with their souls in it, had ever done. Once he tracked the possible path of Russia across the wildest border wastes to the Indian frontier. He went everywhere languidly but persistently, seldom roused, but never discouraged. A man may be very brave outside, though he is not brave within; and

weakness is linked to strength in ways beyond our guessing. He went into such wilds once, that they gave him an "ovation" at the Geographical Society's meeting, not because of any information he had brought them, or anything he had done, but because he had been so far off, where so few people had ever been. And periodically he came back to the Square; he would not leave that familiar house. His wife's drawing-room was kept just as she had liked it, though no one entered the room: the cook and John the butler, who had married, having the charge of everything. And when Mr. Beresford came back to England, he went home, living downstairs generally, with one of his travelling companions to bear him company. Maxwell and he had dropped apart. They were still by way of being fast friends, and doubtless, had one wanted the other, would still have proved so—last resource of friendship, in which the severed may still hope. But as nothing happened to either, their relations waxed cold and distant. The doctor had never got clear of the suspicion which had risen in his mind at Mrs. Beresford's death. It is true that had James Beresford given the poor lady that "strong sweet dose" she once had asked for, Maxwell would have forgiven his friend with all his heart. I do not know, in such a strange case, what the Doctor could have done; probably exactly as he did afterwards do, invent a death-certificate which might be accepted as possible, though it was not in accordance with the facts. But, anyhow, he would have taken up warmly, and stood by his friend to his last gasp. This being the case, it is impossible to tell on what principle it was that Maxwell half hated Beresford, having a lurking suspicion that he had done it, a suspicion contradicted by his own statement and by several of the facts. But this was the case. The man who would have helped his wife boldly, heart-brokenly, to escape from living agony, was one thing; but he who would give her a fatal draught, or connive at her getting it, and then veil himself so that no one should know, was different. So Mr. Maxwell thought. The inconsistency might be absurd, but it was so. They positively dropped out of acquaintance. The men who visited James Beresford when he was at home, were men with tags to their names, mystic initials, F.G.S.'s, F.R.S.'s, F.S.A.'s, and others of that class. And Maxwell, who was his oldest friend, dropped off. He said to himself that if Beresford ever wanted him badly, he would find his friendship surviving. But Beresford did not want Maxwell nor Maxwell Beresford; and thus they were severed for a suspicion which would not have severed them had it been a reality, or so at least Maxwell thought. The doctor still went down once a week regularly to visit Miss Charity, and so kept up his knowledge of the family; but "nothing came" of the old fancy that had been supposed to exist between him and Cherry. They all hardened down unconsciously, these middle-aged folk, in their various ways. The doctor became a little rougher, a little redder, a trifle more weatherbeaten; and Miss Cherry grew imperceptibly more faded, more slim, more prim. As for Miss Charity,

being now over seventy, she was younger than ever; her unwrinkled cheeks smoother, her blue eyes as blue, her step almost more alert, her garden more full of roses. "After seventy," she tersely said, "one gets a new lease." And Mrs. Burchell, at the Rectory, was a little stouter, and her husband a little more burly, and both of them more critical. Fifty is perhaps a less amiable age than three-score and ten. I am not sure that it is not the least amiable age of all; the one at which nature begins to resent the fact of growing old. Of all the elder generation, James Beresford was the one to whom it made least change, notwithstanding that he was the only one who had "come through" any considerable struggle. He was still speculative, still fond of philosophical talk, still slow to carry out to logical conclusions any of the somewhat daring theories which he loved to play with. He was as little affected as ever by what he believed and what he did not believe.

As for Cara, however, these five years had made a great difference to her; they had widened the skies over her head and the earth under her feet. Whereas she had been but twelve, a child, groping and often in the dark, now she was seventeen, and every new day that rose was a new wonder to her. Darkness had fled away, and the firmament all around her quivered and trembled with light; night but pretended to be, as in summer, when twilight meets twilight, and makes the moment of so-called midnight and darkness the merriest and sweetest of jests. Everything was bright around her feet, and before her in that flowery path which led through tracts of sunshine. She was no more afraid of life than the flowers are. Round about her the elders, who were her guides, and ought to have been her examples, were not, she might have perceived, had she paused to think, exuberantly happy. They had no blessedness to boast of, nor any exemption from common ills; but it no more occurred to Cara to think that she, *she* could ever be like her good Aunt Cherry, or Mrs. Burchell, than that she could be turned into a blue bird, like the prince in the fairy tale. The one transformation would have been less wonderful than the other. She had lived chiefly at Sunninghill during her father's absence, and it was a favourite theory she with the young Burchells, all but two (there were ten of them), that would progress in time to be the Miss Cherry, and then the Miss Charity, of that maiden house. A fate was upon it, they said. It was always to be in the hands of a Miss Beresford, an old-maidish Charity, to be transmitted to another Charity after her. This was one of the favourite jokes of the rectorial household, warily maintained except by two, *i.e.* Agnes, the eldest, a young woman full of aspirations, and Roger, the second boy, who had aspirations too, or rather who had one aspiration, of which Cara was the object. She would not die Charity Beresford if he could help it; but this was a secret design of which nobody knew. Cara's presence, it may be supposed, had made a great deal of difference at Sunninghill. It had introduced a governess and a great many lessons; and it had introduced juvenile parties and an amount of fun

unparalleled before in the neighbourhood. Not that she was a very merry child, though she was full of visionary happiness; but when she was there, there too was drawn everything the two other elder Charity Beresfords could think of as delightful. The amusements of the princesses down in St. George's were infinitely less considered. To be sure there were many of them, and Cara was but one. She would have been quite happy enough in the garden, among the roses; but because this was the case she had every "distraction" that love could think of, and all the young people in the neighbourhood had reason to rejoice that Cara Beresford had come to live with her aunts at Sunninghill.

However, these delights came to an end when Mr. Beresford came home at length "to settle." To say with what secret dismay, though external pleasure, this news was received at "the Hill" would require a volume. The hearts of the ladies there sank into their shoes. They did not dare to say anything but that they were delighted.

"Of course I am to be congratulated," Miss Charity said, with a countenance that seemed to be cut out of stone. "To see James settle down to his life again is the greatest desire I can have. What good was he to any one, wandering like that over the face of the earth? We might all have been dead and buried before we could have called him back."

"Of course we are *delighted*," said Miss Cherry, with a quaver in her voice. "He is my only brother. People get separated when they come to our time of life, but James and I have always been one in heart. I am more glad than words can say." And then she cried. But she was not a strong-minded or consistent person, and her little paradoxes surprised nobody. Miss Charity herself, however, who was not given to tears, made her blue eyes more muddy that first evening after the news came, than all her seventy years had made them. "What is the child to do?" she asked abruptly when they were alone; "of an age to be 'out,' and without a chaperon, or any sense in his head to teach him that such a thing is wanted?"

"You would not like him to marry again?" said Miss Cherry, blowing her agitated nose.

"I'd like him to have some sense, or sensible notions in his head, whatever he does. What is to become of the child?"

Alas! I fear it was, "What is to become of us without her?" that filled their minds most.

It was autumn; the end of the season at which the Hill was most beautiful. It had its loveliness too in winter, when the wonderful branching of the trees—all that symmetry of line and network which summer hides with loving decorations—was made visible against the broader background of the skies, which gained infinitude from the dropping of those evanescent clouds of foliage. But the common mind rejected the idea of the Hill in winter as that place of bliss which it was acknowledged to be during the warmer half of the year. In autumn, however, the "mists and mellow fruitfulness" of the great plain, the tints of fervid colour which came

to the trees, the soft hazy distances and half-mournful brightness of the waning season, gave the place a special beauty. There were still abundant flowers fringing the lawn; blazing red salvias, geraniums, all the warm-hued plants that reach the "fall;" big hollyhocks flaunting behind backs, and languishing dahlias. Some late roses lingered still; the air was sweet with the faint soft perfume of mignonette; petunias, just on the point of toppling over into decay, made a flutter of white and lilac against the walls, and here and there a bunch of belated honeysuckle, or cluster of jessamine stars out of date, threw themselves forth upon the trellis. It was on the sweetest, mellow autumnal day, warm as July, yet misty as October, that the Miss Beresfords had their last garden-party for Cara. All their parties were for Cara; but this was especially hers, her friends far and near coming to take leave of her, as her life at the Hill terminated.

"She goes just at the proper moment," Miss Charity said, sitting out on the lawn in her white crape shawl, receiving her visitors, with St. George's and all the plain beyond shining through the autumn branches like a picture laid at her feet. "She takes the full good of us to the last, and when winter comes, which lays us bare, she will be off with the other birds. She lasts just a little longer than the swallows," said the old lady with a laugh.

"But you can't wonder, dear Mrs. Beresford, that she should wish to go to her father. What can come up to a father?" said Mrs. Burchell, meaning, it is to be supposed, to smooth over the wound.

Miss Charity lifted her big green fan ominously in her hand. It was closed, and it might have inflicted no slight blow; and, of all things in the world, it would have pleased the old lady most to bring it down smartly upon that fat hand, stuffed desperately into a tight purple glove, and very moist and discoloured by the confinement, which rested on the admirable clergywoman's knee.

Meanwhile Roger Burchell, who was bold, and did not miss his chances, had got Cara away from the croquet players and the talk, on pretence of showing her something. "I am coming to see you in town," he said. "It is as easy to go there as to come here, and I shan't care for coming here when you are gone. So you need not say good-by to me."

"Very well," said Cara, laughing; "is that all? I don't mean to say good-by to any one. I am not going for good. Of course I shall come back."

"You will never come back just the same," said Roger; "but mind what I tell you. I mean to come to town. I have an aunt at Notting Hill. When I get leave from the college I shall go there. The old lady will be pleased, and so you shall see me every Sunday, just as you do now."

"Every Sunday!" said Cara, slightly surprised. "I don't mind, Roger; it can't matter to me; but I don't think they will like it here."

"They will like it if you do," said the enterprising youth. He was twenty, and soon about to enter on his profession, which was that of an engineer. He was not deeply concerned as to what his parents might feel, but at the same time he was perfectly confident of their appreciation of Cara as an excellent match, should that luck be his. This is not intended to mean that Roger thought of Cara as a good match. He had, on the contrary, an honest boyish love for her, quite true and genuine, if not of the highest kind. She was the prettiest girl he knew, and the sweetest. She was clever too in her way, though that was not his way. She was the sort of girl to be proud of, wherever you might go with her; and, in short, Roger was so fond of Cara, that but for that brilliant idea of his, of passing his Sundays with his aunt at Notting Hill instead of at home, her departure would have clouded heaven and earth for him. As it was, he felt the new was rather an improvement on the old; it would throw him into closer contact with the object of his love. Cara took the arrangement generally with great composure. She was glad enough to think of seeing some one on the dull Sundays; and somehow the Sundays used to be duller in the Square, where nobody minded them, than at the Hill, where they were kept in the most orthodox way. Thus she had no objection to Roger's visits; but the prospect did not excite her. "I suppose you are soon going away somewhere?" she said with great calm. "Where are you going? to India? You cannot come from India to your aunt at Notting Hill."

"But I shall not go—not as long as I can help it—not till——"

Here Roger looked at her with eager eyes. He was not handsome; he was stoutly built, like his father, with puffy cheeks and premature black whiskers. But his eyes at the present moment were full of fire. "Not till——" How much he meant by that broken phrase; and to Cara it meant just nothing at all. She did not even look at him, to meet his eyes, which were so full of ardour. But she was not disinclined to loiter along this walk instead of joining the crowd. She was thinking her own thoughts, not his.

"I wonder if papa will be changed? I wonder if the house will look strange? I wonder——" said Cara, half under her breath. She was not talking to him, yet perhaps if he had not been with her she would not have said the words aloud. He was a kind of shield to her from others, an unconscious half-companion. She did not mind what she said when he was there. Sometimes she replied to him at random; often he so answered her, not knowing what she meant. It was from want of comprehension on his part, not want of attention; but it was simple carelessness on hers. He listened to these wonderings of hers eagerly, with full determination to fathom what she meant.

"He will be changed, and so will the house," said Roger. "We may be sure of it. You were but a child when you left; now you are a—young lady. Even if he was not changed, you would think him so," cried Roger, with insight which surprised himself; "but those who

have grown up with you, Cara—I, for instance, who have seen you every day, I can never change. You may think so, but you will be mistaken. I shall always be the same."

She turned to look at him, half amused, half wondering. "You, Roger; but what has that to do with it?" she said. How little she cared! She had faith in him: oh, yes; did not think he would change; believed he would always be the same. What did it matter? It did not make her either sadder or gladder to know that it was unlikely there would be any alteration in him.

"What are you doing here, Cara, when you ought to be looking after your guests, or playing croquet, or amusing yourself?"

"I am amusing myself, Aunt Cherry, as much as I wish to amuse myself. It is not amusing to go away."

"My darling, we must think of your poor father," said Miss Cherry, her voice trembling; "and there are all your young friends. Will you go and help to form that game, Roger? They want a gentleman. Cara, dear, I would rather you did not walk with Roger Burchell like this, when everybody is here."

"He said he had something to show me," said Cara. "I was glad to get away. All this looks so like saying farewell; as if I might never be here again."

"Cara, if you make me cry, I shall not be fit to be seen; and we must not make a show of ourselves before all these people." Miss Cherry pressed her handkerchief to her eyes. "I am so silly; my eyes get so red for nothing. What did Roger have to show you? He ought to be at work, that boy."

"He has an aunt at Notting Hill," said Cara, with a soft laugh; "and he told me he meant to come to town on Sundays instead of coming here. He says he shall see me quite as often as usual. I suppose he thought I should miss him. Poor Roger! if that were all!"

"But, Cara, we must not allow that," said Miss Cherry. "I must speak to his mother. See him every Sunday, as usual! it is ridiculous; it must be put a stop to. Roger Burchell! a lad who is nobody, who has his way to make in the world, and neither connections, nor fortune, nor any advantage—"

Here Miss Cherry was arrested by Cara's look turned calmly upon her, without excitement or anxiety, yet with that half-smile which shows when a young observer has seen the weak point in the elder's discourse.

"What should his connections or his fortune have to do with it if he wanted to see me and I wanted to see him?" said Cara; "we have been friends all our lives. But do not make yourself uneasy, Aunt Cherry; for though I might, perhaps, like well enough to see Roger now and then, I don't want him every Sunday. What would papa say? Roger thinks Sunday in the Square is like Sunday here—church, and then a stroll, and

then church again. You know it was not like that when I was at home before."

"No," said Miss Cherry, with a sigh, "but then it was different." She had her own thoughts as to whose fault that was, and by whose influence James had been led away from natural churchgoing; but she was far too loyal, both to the dead and to the living, to show this. "Cara," she added, hurriedly, "in that respect, things will be as you like best hereafter. You will be the one to settle what Sunday is to be—and what a great many other things are to be. You must realise what is before you, my dear child."

"I can't realise Roger there in papa's library," said Cara, "or upstairs. Am I to live *there*? in the drawing-room. Will it never be changed?"

"It is so pretty, Cara—and you would like the things to be as pleased her," said Miss Cherry, in trembling tones.

Cara did not make any response—her face wore a doubtful expression, but she did not say anything. She turned her back upon the landscape, and looked up at the house. "Shall I never come back just the same?" she said. "Roger says so; but he is not clever—how should he know? what should change me? But the Square is not like the Hill," she added, with a little shiver. "Papa will not think of me as you do—everything for Cara; that will make a change."

"But you can think of him," said Cherry, "everything for *him*; and perhaps, for a woman that is the happiest way of the two."

Once more Cara was silent. Clouds of doubt, of reluctance, of unwilling repugnance, were floating through her mind. She had a horror and fear of the Square, in which her life was henceforward to be passed—and of her father, of whom she knew so much more than he was aware. For a moment the old tumult in her soul about the secret she had never told came surging back upon her, a sudden tide from which she could scarcely escape. "Come, Aunt Cherry," she said, suddenly seizing her astonished companion by the arm. "Come and play for us. We must have a dance on the lawn my last day."

When the Sea was Young.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

WE are best able to realise the fact that our earth is a globe-shaped orb, one among many such orbs peopling space, when we contemplate the wide expanse of ocean. Although the teachings of astronomy place the real figure of our earth beyond all possibility of question, it is nevertheless not readily rendered sensible to observation. Whatever science may teach us, we usually see the earth as a generally level surface arched over by a dome of sky, which, whether clear or veiled by clouds, deceives us as to the earth's true extent and figure. Not only is this apparent shape of the sky deceptive, suggesting a somewhat flattened dome rather than the visible half of a space which, if regarded as bounded at all, should appear as bounded by a perfectly spherical surface, but the sky, seeming to spring from the visible terrestrial horizon, appears to have an arch of very limited extent. Under ordinary conditions we unconsciously regard the portion of the sky which lies next to the visible horizon as some five or six miles from us at the utmost,* while the part overhead seems not more than two or three miles from us. Where the air is exceptionally clear the extent of the sky-vault appears somewhat greater; but ordinarily some such conception as we have indicated is suggested respecting the size and shape of the dome which the heavens appear to form over our heads. And accordingly, when we try to realise the idea that the earth is a globe, we unconsciously picture it as a globe enclosed within the sky-vault, which we conceive as extended below the horizon so as entirely to surround the earth. According to this conception the earth would have a diameter of no more than some thirteen or fourteen miles; and reason at once rejects this conception as altogether inadequate. But where there is a

* That the mind does not, in its unconscious action, attribute a very great distance to the horizon is shown by the strange illusion produced during balloon ascents. As the balloon rises the horizon seems to rise up all around the aeronaut, so that the visible portion of the earth beneath him seems to assume the shape of a vast basin. If the mind assigned its true distance to the circle where land and sky seemed to meet, this illusion would not occur; for there can of course be no doubt that the apparent rising of the horizon all round the rising balloon is due to the idea present in the aeronaut's mind that, while he rises perceptibly from the earth, the circle forming the visible land-horizon ought perceptibly to sink, which it would do if it were as near as it had been unconsciously assumed to be.

wide expanse of ocean, whether partially limited or not by land-scenery, the real extent of the terrestrial globe is suggested, though not actually indicated. The mind recognises, from the appearances presented to the eye, that the ocean has a curved surface of enormous extent; while the arch of the sky is recognised as manifestly not springing from the visible horizon, itself thrown much further away (if the eye is well raised above the sea-level) than when an ordinary land-surface limits the range of view. When the air is very clear, so that objects many miles beyond the water-horizon can be distinctly seen, the sense of the real vastness of the terrestrial globe is still more strongly impressed on the mind, especially if the objects so seen are such that their actual distance and position can be recognised. For instance, a portion of elevated land-surface seen beyond the sea-horizon does not so strongly suggest real remoteness as a ship "hull down," unless there should happen to be land nearly at the distance of the sea-horizon, so that by the greater distinctness of such nearer land the remoteness of other land seen above the horizon-line is indicated.*

But apart from the effect produced, as it were instinctively, by the actual appearance of the ocean, another effect is produced on the mind by the consideration of the ocean's real nature. Of all terrestrial features the ocean is the one which best deserves to be regarded as cosmical. Rather, perhaps, it should be said that the division of a planet's surface into land and water is the characteristic most readily to be recognised when the planet is viewed from some other celestial orb; so that when we contemplate our ocean we are regarding a feature of the earth as a planet—one, too, whereof others besides the inhabitants of the earth may be cognisant. The thought that we may thus be sharing our impressions of the earth's condition with beings of some other world—that, in however diverse a degree, inhabitants of Venus, or of Mercury, or perhaps even of Mars, may be able to note that very feature which we are considering—brings forcibly before the mind the fact, otherwise so hard to realise, that this earth of ours is a globe travelling like the other planets round the sun, rotating on its axis as we see the other planets rotating; and that, in fine, of all those orbs which astronomy presents to us as distributed and moving so variously through space, the earth is that one which we are able to examine under the most favourable conditions. So that an astronomer at such times comes to recognise an astronomical and cosmical, rather than a merely terrestrial, interest in the contemplation of our earth. He finds his science brought into close connection with terrestrial researches, since these afford the only means available for examining one among the orbs which form the subject of his study. And although his observations may serve to

* For the same reason an ocean scene at night is seldom so suggestive of the earth's real nature as a daylight view of the ocean; for the curvature of the ocean-surface cannot be clearly recognised at night, nor usually can any objects far beyond the sea-horizon be perceived at all, still less their true distance appreciated.

render him very doubtful whether among all the orbs in space there is a single one which very closely resembles the earth, yet he finds reason also to believe that in general respects the earth's past and future condition illustrate well the significance of phenomena presented by orbs now very unlike her. So that the astronomer finds a new interest in contemplating the earth as one among the bodies to which his science relates. It is not merely with regard to space, but with regard to time also, that her aspect, thus viewed, becomes suggestive. This globe, to which we are bound by the chains of a universal force, is not only among the unnumbered and all-various globes scattered throughout infinite space, but we perceive in her the traces of processes carrying back our thoughts over unnumbered æons in the past, the germs of effects belonging to periods as immense in the remote future.

In this respect the study of the ocean is especially suggestive. For of all things terrestrial the ocean is at once the most ancient and the one which will endure longest. Mountains and hills have from time immemorial been taken as emblems of the long-lasting. The Bible speaks of "the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills;" compares "the precious things brought forth by the sun and moon" with "the chief things of the ancient mountains and the precious things of the lasting hills;" and, as a supreme type of the Almighty's power, Habakkuk says: "God stood and measured the earth; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow." But, in reality, the mountains are young compared with the ocean,* while for ages after our present mountains have disappeared the same ocean whose waves beat now upon our shores will lave the shores of continents as yet unformed.

But even those periods of the ocean's history which are thus brought

* It is related in the life of John Herschel that when he was still a boy he asked his father, the great astronomer, William Herschel, what he thought was the oldest of all things. "The father replied, after the Socratic method, by putting another question: 'And what do you yourself suppose is the oldest of all things?' The boy was not successful in his answers; whereon the old astronomer took up a small stone from the garden-walk: 'There, my child, there is the oldest of all the things that I certainly know.'" The biographer from whom we have quoted says that we can trace in that grasp and grouping of many things in one, implied in the stone as the oldest of things, as forming one of the main features which characterized the habit of the younger Herschel's philosophy. But in truth the stone speaks to the thoughtful mind of something far older than itself—not, indeed, older in respect of mere existence as matter (for all matter is eternal; and in this sense the bud that flowered yesterday is no less ancient than the substance of the time-worn hill, or the waters of the everlasting ocean), but older in the sense wherein that which fashions is older than the thing fashioned. For the stone upon the garden-walk at Slough had either been rounded by the waves of ocean, or had been shaped by the running waters of brook or river formed by rains, the proceeds of evaporation from ocean's surface. Nay, even passing to still earlier periods of the stone's history—leaving, that is, the consideration of its formation as a stone to consider the formation of its substance—its substance was gathered at the bottom of the sea when the ocean was already more aged than the oldest mountains now existing.

before our thoughts—the vast ages during which the land-surface of the globe has been constantly changing, rising and sinking alternately according to the varying pressures exerted by the earth's interior forces, and the ages yet to come, during which like changes will take place—are as nothing compared with the duration of three stages of the ocean's history, one of which we now purpose to consider. The ocean's entire existence under its present aspect is one of these stages; of the others, one preceded and the other will follow the present stage at intervals of probably many hundred millions of years; while the waters comprising the ocean presented during the first stage, and will present during the coming, or third stage, an appearance utterly unlike that of the ocean in the present era of its existence.

It is now admitted by almost all students of science that the earth, and the solar system of which she is a member, reached their present condition by processes of development. The exact nature of those processes may be matter of doubt and uncertainty, just as the exact nature of the process of development by which animal types have reached their present condition may be doubtful. But exactly as biologists hold by almost universal consent the general doctrine of development, though they differ as to the exact course along which such development proceeded, so every astronomer of repute believes in the evolution of the solar system by natural processes, though different ideas may be entertained as to the exact history, either of the solar system as a whole, or of its various members, during long past æons of ages. Whatever theory of evolution we adopt, however, or in whatever way we combine the various theories which have been advanced, one fact in the past history of our earth stands out with unmistakable distinctness. The whole frame of the globe on which we live, and move, and have our being, was once glowing with intense heat. Whether we consider the earth's frame with the geologist, or study with the astronomer the nature of the planets' movements and the evidence so afforded respecting prior conditions of the solar system, we are alike forced to this conclusion. At a very remote period the whole substance of the earth must have been molten with intensity of heat; at a still more remote period the whole of that substance must have been gaseous with a heat still more intense; and these stages of the earth's history, remote though they were, and continuing so long that, according to our modes of measuring time, they were practically everlasting, were yet but two among a series of eras whose real number, no doubt, was to all intents and purposes *infinite*.

Now when we go back to even the nearer of those two eras we find that we must conceive of our ocean during that era as utterly unlike the seas which now encompass the earth. Its substance was the same, or nearly so, but its condition must have been altogether different. No water could for a moment rest upon the intensely hot surface of a globe raging with heat exceeding that of a smelting furnace. There could not have been during that era oceans of liquid water, though all

the water of our present oceans surrounded the earth then as now. The water must at that time have existed in the form of mixed vapour and cloud; that is, it must have been spread through the air partly as pure aqueous vapour and partly in those aggregations of minute liquid globules and vesicles of water forming visible cloud-masses. There must also at that time, as now, have been various kinds of cloud-forms—an outside layer consisting of the light feathery cirrus clouds, below that a layer of the cumulus or "woolpack" clouds, and below that again a deep layer of the densest nimbus or rain-clouds, from which perfect sheets of rain must at all times have been falling; not, however, to reach the glowing surface of the earth, but to be vaporised in their fall, and in the form of vapour to pass upwards again. We say that all this *must* have been; because, in point of fact, however doubtful we may feel as to many details of the earth's condition in the remote era we are considering, there can be no doubt whatever as to the general facts indicated above. We have only to inquire what would happen at the present day if the earth's whole frame were to be gradually heated until at last the surface glowed with a heat equal to that of white-hot iron, to perceive that, whatever other changes might take place, the ocean certainly would be entirely evaporated—boiled off, so to speak. But the water thus added to the earth's atmospheric envelope in the form of vapour could not possibly remain *wholly* in that form. At a great distance from the glowing earth the aqueous vapour would find a cooler region, and higher still would be exposed to the actual cold of space. Hence there would follow inevitably the formation of clouds of the various orders, *cirrus*, *cumulus*, and *nimbus*, not probably in absolutely distinct layers, but the *cirrus* commingled with the *cumulus*, the *cumulus* with the *nimbus*, and the whole series of cloud-layers affected by the most violent disturbances, partly from the continual rushing upwards of freshly-formed vapour, partly from the continual rarefactions and condensations of the air under the varying conditions to which it would be subjected through the continual changes of the watery envelope. For at every change from the form of pure aqueous vapour to the cloud-form, an enormous amount of heat would be developed, while corresponding quantities of heat would be withdrawn in vaporising other masses of watery matter. The depth of the atmospheric region throughout which these stupendous processes were continually in progress must far have exceeded the depth of the cloud-regions of our own atmosphere. For the same heat which prevented the water from resting on the earth's surface must have prevented the heavier rain-clouds from approaching within many miles of that surface without being turned into pure aqueous vapour. Again, not only would the layer of rain-clouds, thus raised many miles above the earth's surface, be also many miles in depth, but the heat prevailing throughout the layer would in turn prevent a layer of cumulus clouds from being formed, except at a great height above the rain-cloud layer. In like manner the

cirrus or snow-cloud layer would be raised high above the layer of the cumulus clouds. And each of these layers, besides being separated from the next below by a deep intermediate space of commingled cloud-forms, would also be of great thickness. Hence we may fairly assume that the extreme range of the lightest and highest clouds in that era of the earth's history must have been many miles from the earth's surface, even if the atmosphere then contained no greater amount of matter (other than its watery constituents) than at present. But we have reason for believing that, besides the oxygen and nitrogen now present in the air, there must have been at that remote era enormous quantities of carbonic, chloric, and sulphurous gases besides an excess of oxygen; and all these, with the aqueous vapour (alone far exceeding the entire present atmosphere of the earth), expanded by a tremendous heat. This heavily-loaded atmosphere must therefore have extended much farther, we may even say *many times* farther, from the earth than her present aerial envelope. It is not at all unlikely that the outermost part of the cloud-envelope was then several hundred miles from the earth's surface, itself raised, through the expansive effects of heat, many miles above the level it was to assume when cooled. In attempting, indeed, to conceive the effects produced by that tremendous heat with which, most certainly, the whole frame of our earth was once instinct, we are far more likely to fall short of the reality than to exceed it, partly because the physical processes concerned are so far beyond our ordinary experience, but much more because they operated on so inconceivably vast a scale.

While it cannot but be regarded as certain (that is, as not less assured than the theory of cosmical development itself) that during a very remote and long-lasting period the water now forming our seas surrounded the earth in the form of mixed vapour and cloud, yet this consequence of the development theory, however certain, is so remarkable that one would wish to see it confirmed, if possible, by some evidence derived from actually existent worlds. Now as the various orbs peopling the universe occupy all regions of space, so they must present all the various phases through which each orb has to pass with the progress of time. It would be absurd to suppose, for instance, that every star (that is, every sun) peopling space is passing through exactly the same period of sun-life as our own sun, no less absurd to suppose that every planet is passing through the same period of planet-life, or each moon through the same period of moon-life. But it is in reality seen to be as absurd, when once we open our eyes to the real meaning of the astronomy of our day, to suppose that among the millions of millions of bodies which exist even in that mere corner of space which is measured by the range of our most powerful telescopes, there are not illustrations of *every* stage of the existence of worlds in space, from the first known to us, the vaporous, to the sun-like, and thence through all the forms of world-life down to the stage of absolute refrigeration or planetary death. Some among these varieties must exist within the solar

system, and therefore admit of being telescopically examined, unless we suppose that by some amazing accident all the members of the solar system are passing through the same exact stage of world-life. But this, though it is the theory commonly accepted (because of a species of mental indolence which makes the most uniform theory appear of easiest acceptance), is in reality the most glaringly improbable, or rather the most utterly impossible theory it ever entered the heart of man to conceive. It is as though one who knew that a number of ships, unequal in size and power, had set out at different times from various ports on long sea-journeys, should assume, as the most probable opinion respecting their position at any time selected at random, that they were riding all abreast upon the long crest of some great ocean roller.

But regarding the planets of the solar system as presumably in various stages of world-life, according to what law may we expect to find them ranged in point of age? May we take the outermost as the oldest, and the innermost as the youngest? According to the development theory conceived by Laplace, we might do so; though even then the various ages assigned to the several planets would only be arranged in the order of their actual antiquity, not with reference to the youth, maturity, and decadence of planetary life. A planet younger than another in years might be older in development; just as an animal twenty years old might be aged, while another thirty years old might scarcely have reached maturity. Moreover, it begins to be recognised that Laplace's theory of the formation of our solar system from without inwards does not present the whole truth, even if it presents the most characteristic feature of the system's process of development. Other processes have been at work, and even still continue to be at work, which may have helped to complete the fashioning of interior planets while outer planets still remained unfinished. Indeed, it is more than suspected that Jupiter may still be growing, and that Saturn may not even have assumed his final planetary form.* But undoubtedly the most important consideration is the first mentioned. Among planets so unequal in size and mass as those of the solar system it cannot be but that the duration of planet-life and of its several periods must differ very largely. If all the planets, then, had been fashioned simultaneously, they would now have reached very different stages of progression. Not only so, but even enormous differences in the epochs of planetary formation would probably be more than cancelled by these varieties in the rates of growth and development.

Shall we, then, take quantity of matter as the main guide for determining the relative duration of planetary life and of its various stages? Experiment will readily show whether and to what degree such a guide might be trusted. It is manifest that the chief question to be

* Something of this sort is hinted at by Laplace himself, when he says of Saturn's rings that they seem to him to be "*des preuves toujours subsistantes de l'extension primitive de l'atmosphère de Saturne, et de ses retraites successives.*"

determined is the relative rate of planetary cooling through the various stages, from the time when a planet is a mere mass of vapour, down to the time when its whole substance is entirely refrigerated. Suppose, then, we take two globes of iron, one two inches and the other one inch in diameter, and, heating them both to a red heat in the same fire, set them aside to cool. From the result we can form an opinion whether the larger or smaller of two similar and similarly heated orbs will cool the more quickly, or whether size has little or no influence on the rate of cooling. The result of the experiment leaves us no room for doubt on this point. Long after the smaller globe has ceased to glow the larger still shows its ruddy lustre, while a still longer interval separates the time when the smaller globe can be handled from the time when the larger has cooled down to the same extent. We infer, then, that size, or rather quantity of matter, most importantly affects a body's rate of cooling. Indeed, a little consideration shows that this might have been expected. For a body can only part with its heat from its surface. Now the surface of the larger globe in our experiment is four times as great as that of the smaller, and therefore the larger gives out moment by moment four times as much heat as the smaller, when both are at the same temperature; but the larger has eight times as much matter in it as the smaller, and therefore eight times as much heat to part with, both starting from the same temperature. Naturally, therefore, since the larger, with eight times as much heat to give out, expends that supply only four times as fast, the heat supply of the larger lasts longest. We should expect the supply to last about twice as long; and, but for some minor considerations which affect the practical carrying out of the experiment, that would be the relative duration of the heat-emission from the two globes. Only of course it does not follow that the test by touch would correspond with the law here indicated, for the surface of a metal globe may be cool enough for handling while the interior is still exceedingly hot.

It is, indeed, the consideration last indicated which prevents the careful student of science from accepting as demonstrated certain conclusions which have been somewhat confidently advanced respecting the time required by our own earth for cooling down to its present condition. The experiments of Bischof, for example, upon basalt have been quoted as showing that our globe would require 350 millions of years to cool down from $2,000^{\circ}$ to 200° Centigrade, and the process has been referred to as if it were long since completed, so that that period certainly might be reckoned as belonging to the earth's past; yet an enormous portion of the earth's globe may still possess a degree of heat between those limits, and possibly nearer to the higher limit than to the lower.

Yet while it is in our opinion an altogether hopeless task to attempt to deduce absolute time-measures, either experimentally for the determination of our earth's antiquity, or theoretically for the comparison of other planets' development with hers, we can nevertheless very con-

fidently infer that some planets must be far less advanced than the earth towards planetary maturity, and that others must have passed beyond such maturity to extreme old age, if not to decrepitude or even to planetary death. When we consider, for instance, that the quantity of matter in Jupiter exceeds three hundred-fold that in our earth's globe, we cannot doubt that the stages of Jupiter's existence as a planet must exceed the corresponding stages of the earth's existence many times in duration. We cannot argue, indeed, directly as follows, as some have done: Since Jupiter contains three hundred times as much matter as the earth, the globe experiment described above shows that Jupiter would take nearly seven times as long as the earth in completing any given stage of planetary cooling, for if one globe contains three hundred times as much matter as another it will exceed this other nearly seven times in diameter. Nor can we proceed to argue that, since Bischof's experiments indicate 350 millions of years for one stage of the earth's cooling, Jupiter would require more than 2,350 millions of years for that stage, and so must be at least 2,000 millions of years behind the earth in development, from the consideration of that stage alone, and probably some 10,000 millions of years behind the earth altogether, in such sort that some 10,000 millions of years hence Jupiter will be in the same stage of planetary existence that our earth is now passing through. The definiteness of such statements as these makes them more attractive to many than more general statements, but they cannot be relied upon. All that can be safely alleged—and manifestly so much *can* be safely alleged—is that planets like Jupiter and Saturn, exceeding the earth enormously in quantity of matter, must have required far longer periods of time for the various stages of planetary development, and must consequently be as yet far less advanced towards planetary maturity. It follows, equally of course, that bodies like Mars, Mercury, and the Moon, as well as the moons of Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus, being so much less than the earth in mass, must require much less time for the various stages of their development, and may be regarded as having probably long since passed the era corresponding to that through which our earth is now passing.* It would be, therefore, to Saturn and Jupiter that the telescopist would turn for indications of the existence of ocean-waters in the state wherein our own ocean must once have existed. Instead of holding the opinion, commonly

* Only it is to be noted that the smaller the orbs considered the smaller the periods of their existence, and the less, therefore, the probability that differences so arising would cancel differences in the actual epoch of first formation. For instance, suppose that the above reasoning about Jupiter could be relied upon in points of detail as well as in its general sense. Then we see that a difference of no less than 2,000 millions of years comes in as affecting one stage only of the history of that planet and of our own earth; but if instead of comparing our earth with Jupiter, containing three hundred times more matter, we compared her with an orb which she *exceeded* in the same degree, we should find that the smaller orb would require about 75 millions of years for the stage which lasted 350 millions of years in the earth's case—a difference of only 275 instead of 2,000 millions of years.

expressed in our books of astronomy, that, unless very strong evidence is presented to the contrary, other planets ought to be regarded as probably like our earth, we ought (at least if we accept, as every astronomer does, the doctrine of cosmical evolution) to expect to find Jupiter and Saturn in some far earlier stage of planetary existence, and only on the strength of absolutely overwhelming evidence to admit the possibility that they may resemble the earth. Seeing, however, that every particle of evidence yet obtained respecting those planets favours the belief that they are in that early stage of development in which we should expect to find them, while many parts of the telescopic evidence are such as cannot possibly be interpreted on any other theory, it would seem to be only by an amazing effort of scientific conservatism that the old view, originally incredible and opposed by all the telescopic evidence, is retained in our books of astronomy, as though it had been the subject of some such demonstration as Kepler gave of the laws which bear his name, or Newton of the laws of gravity.

Without entering here at length into the evidence relating to the age of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, or rather to their present stage of development, we shall consider how their appearance corresponds with that which the earth must be supposed to have presented when the waters now forming her oceans enveloped her in the form of commingled vaporous and cloudy masses.

We have seen that at that remote epoch the earth must not only have been completely cloud-enwrapped, but that the outermost of her cloud-layers must have been raised hundreds of miles from her real surface. Measured, then, by an observer on some other planet, her apparent dimensions would then have been far greater than at present, for her outermost cloud-layer would be measured, not her true body. Thus judged, then, to have a much greater volume than she really has, she would be regarded (supposing her total mass to have been determined, as it might readily have been, from the motions of her moon) as having a mean density much less than that of her actual globe. How much less we do not know, because we cannot determine the extent to which her own frame would be expanded, her atmosphere swollen, and the various cloud-layers floating in it thrust away, so to speak, from her intensely heated surface. But it may well be believed that her apparent diameter would be so increased that (her volume being increased necessarily in a much greater degree) her estimated density would be much less than her present density. Now this precisely corresponds with what we find in the case of Saturn and Jupiter, each of these planets having a very small density compared with the earth's, though the tremendous attractive power residing in their enormous globes would, if unresisted, lead to a high degree of compression, and therefore to great density. The evidence afforded by the spectroscope renders it highly improbable that these planets are formed of other substances than those forming the earth, or of the same substances in very different proportions. We

know that the attractive energy of these planets' masses must act out yonder precisely as the energy of our earth's mass acts throughout *her* frame. Experiments assure us that no cavities can possibly exist in the interior of a planet, so that Brewster's ingenious attempt to account for the small density of Saturn and Jupiter, by supposing these planets to be but hollow shells, fails altogether to remove the difficulty. There remains, then, only the supposition that these planets' attractive energies are in some way resisted, and the natural effect of those energies, extreme compression, prevented. And we find just the required explanation in the theory (to which we had been already led on *a priori* grounds) that these planets are still young and therefore intensely hot, the waters one day to form them being thus raised into their atmospheres, enveloping the planets in enormously deep and complex layers of mingled cloud and vapour, the planets' real globes lying far within these cloud-envelopes, and being also themselves greatly expanded by the tremendous heat with which their substance is instinct. Not only is this the only available explanation of the small density of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, but it is a manifestly sufficient explanation.

It is next to be noticed that certain very striking phenomena would result from the great depth of the earth's vapour-laden and cloud-laden atmosphere, disturbed not only by tremendous hurricanes moving horizontally, but also by vertical movements of great energy and velocity. Conceive the descent of vast sheets of water towards some intensely-heated portion of the earth's surface, and the effect of their rapid conversion into vapour. The mass of vapour thus formed, being much lighter than the surrounding atmosphere, would rise just as heated air from a chimney rises in the surrounding cooler and therefore heavier air; only with much greater rapidity, because the vapour of water is far lighter than heated air, and the atmosphere of the remote period we are considering was far denser than our present air. The mass of vapour would rush upwards to an enormous height in a very short time, and, coming from a region relatively near the centre of the earth to a region farther away, it would be affected by the difference in the rate of rotational movement at these different levels. For instance, at the present surface of the equator the movement due to rotation has a velocity of rather more than a thousand miles an hour, while at a height of a hundred miles above the surface the air is carried round with a velocity twenty-five miles greater per hour. If, then, a body or a mass of vapour were shot upwards from the equator to a height of a hundred miles, it would, while at that height, lag behind the surrounding parts of the air, and, in fact, would travel backwards at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour.

If the matter propelled upwards were vaporous, and when at the higher level became condensed into cloud, a trail of clouds would be formed along a latitude-parallel, and, as observed from some other planet, the earth would appear to be girt round by a whitish band parallel to the equator. The deeper the envelope of mixed vapour and cloud, the more

readily would such bands form ; and remembering the tremendous energy of the causes at work, the whole frame of the earth glowing with intensest heat, and keeping the whole mass of water now forming our oceans in the form of mixed cloud and vapour, we cannot doubt that well-marked belts must almost at all times have existed in the earth's cloud-envelope. The earth, then, would have appeared as a *belted planet*, resembling the planet Jupiter (or Saturn without his rings), but on a miniature scale. It is, indeed, common enough to find the belted aspect of Jupiter and Saturn compared with the probable present aspect of the earth, because of the existence of a zone of calms near the equator, bounded on the north and south by the trade-wind zones, and these in their turn by the zones of the counter-trades. But there is not the slightest reason for supposing that these so-called zones could be recognised by an observer viewing the earth from without. Still less reason is there for supposing that they would, even if recognisable, resemble in the remotest degree the well-defined bands surrounding the globes of Saturn and Jupiter. Such as they are, too, they would be found obeying the influence of the sun as the ruler of the day and also of the seasons ; they would be also limited to sea-covered regions ; and, in fine, they would correspond much more nearly with the appearances presented by the planet Mars (where occasionally for a few hours portions of bands, not complete zones, are seen across the Martian seas) than with anything shown on the discs of Jupiter and Saturn. What we see on these giant planets corresponds closely, however, with what we should expect to find in the case of planets whose vapour-laden and cloud-laden atmospheres are so deep as to form a considerable portion of the disc seen and measured by astronomers. For the belts of these giant planets show no dependence whatever upon the progress of day and night, or of the long years of Saturn and Jupiter, but behave in all respects as if generated by forces residing in the planets themselves ; their well-defined shapes also corresponding exactly with what we should expect from the mode of formation indicated above.

But, returning to the earth, it is manifest that cloud-belts formed in the way we have described would not be permanent. Sometimes they might continue for several weeks, sometimes perhaps even for months ; but frequently they would be formed in a few hours, and last but for a few days, or not even, perhaps, for an entire day. So that the belts of the planet earth, viewed in those times from some remote world, would present changes of appearances, sometimes occurring slowly, sometimes rapidly. Now this precisely corresponds with what is observed in the case of the belted planets Jupiter and Saturn. Sometimes the belts remain, though undergoing constant changes of form, for weeks or months together, while sometimes they vanish very soon after their formation.

Again, it is clear that other changes than the formation or dissipation of cloud-belts would affect the deep cloud-laden atmosphere of the planet. Hurricanes and tornadoes would rage from time to time, and sometimes for long periods together, in an atmosphere where processes of evapora-

tion and condensation, with all the rapid variations of temperature occasioned by them, were continually taking place on a scale compared with which that of the most tremendous tropical storm on the earth in our time is utterly insignificant. The effects of such hurricanes and whirling storms would be visible from without through the displacement of the great cloud-masses forming the belts. Sometimes cyclonic storms would produce great circular openings in the cloud-belts, through which the darker depths below would be brought into view. These openings would be visible from without as dark spots on the lighter background of the belts. At other times the uprush of columns of heated vapour, condensing as soon as it reached the higher regions of the planet's atmosphere, would cause the appearance (to an observer outside the earth) of rounded masses of cloud, which, because of their strong reflective power, would seem like spots of white upon the background even of a light belt; and show still more markedly if they appeared above one of the dusky bands corresponding to lower cloud-levels. And besides changes due to great disturbances and rapid movements in the cloud-envelopes, the changes resulting from evaporation and condensation proceeding quietly over extensive portions of these cloud-regions, would be discernible from without. The observer would see dark spaces rapidly forming, where some higher cloud-mass which had been reflecting the sun's light brightly, evaporated, and so allowed part of a lower cloud-layer to be seen. Where the reverse process took place, large masses of transparent aqueous vapour rapidly condensing into cloud, the formation of bright spots would be observed. How closely all this corresponds with what now takes place in the deep vapour-laden atmosphere of Jupiter, will appear from the following account by South of the appearance and rapid disappearance of an enormous dark spot on one of the belts of Jupiter: "On June 3, 1839, I saw with my large achromatic, immediately below the lowest [edge] of the principal belt of Jupiter, a spot larger than I had seen before; it was of a dark colour, but certainly not absolutely black. I estimated it at a fourth of the planet's 'longer' diameter. I showed it to some gentlemen who were present; its enormous extent was such that, on my wishing to have a portrait of it, one of the gentlemen, who was a good draughtsman, kindly undertook to draw me one; whilst I, on the other hand, extremely desirous that its actual magnitude should not rest on estimation, proposed, on account of the scandalous unsteadiness of the large instrument, to measure it with" a telescope five feet in length. "Having obtained for my companion the necessary drawing instruments, I went to work, he preparing himself to commence his. On my looking, however, into the telescope of five feet, I was astonished to find that the large dark spot, except at its eastern and western extremities, had become much whiter than any of the other parts of the planet, and" in thirty-four minutes from the first observation, "these miserable scraps" (that is, the two extremities of the original spot) "were the only remains of a spot which, but a few minutes before, had extended over at least 22,000 miles."

Again, Webb, in his singularly useful little treatise, *Celestial Objects for Common Telescopes*, thus describes certain small whitish spots seen for a time on the planet's dusky belts. Recently, "minute white roundish specks about the size of satellites" have been seen "on the dark southern belts. Dawes first saw them in 1849; Lassell in 1850, with his Newtonian reflector, two feet in aperture. Dawes has since given several striking drawings of them," and they have been seen with a nine-inch telescope by Sir. W. K. Murray, in Scotland. "They are evidently not permanent. Common telescopes have no chance with them, or with similar traces which Lassell has detected (1858) on the bright belts." But, indeed, many pages might be occupied with the account of appearances on Jupiter's belts, indicating the progress of changes such as could not be looked for except in the case of a planet enveloped by an exceedingly deep atmosphere laden with enormous masses of cloud and vapour. In the case of Saturn such appearances are less often and less clearly recognised, doubtless because the planet lies so much farther away. For it should be remembered, in comparing the accounts which observers give of the two planets, Jupiter and Saturn, that these orbs are studied under very different conditions, a telescope nearly twenty times as powerful being required to show Saturn as to show Jupiter with equal distinctness.

One circumstance seems to us to merit attention here, of which, so far as we know, no explanation has ever yet been attempted. There is sometimes to be observed along the belts of Jupiter, and in particular along the great equatorial belt, a certain regularity of marking giving to the belt affected by it somewhat of the appearance of a ring marked with a series of regular elliptical mouldings; or, to use Webb's description, the belts throw out dusky loops or festoons, "whose elliptical interiors, arranged lengthwise, and sometimes with great regularity, have the aspect of a girdle of luminous egg-shaped clouds surrounding the globe." "These oval forms," he proceeds, "which were very conspicuous in the equatorial zone (as the interval between the belts may be called) in 1869-70, and of which the vestiges still remain (in 1872-73), have been seen in other regions of the planet, and are probably of frequent recurrence. It is by no means easy to assign a reason for this prevalent configuration, which sometimes shows itself in a solitary ellipse, seen by Gledhill and Mayer in 1869-70." Several considerations suggest themselves when we study these peculiarities thoughtfully. First, the enormous size of these oval cloud-masses indicates that they are formed in a very deep atmosphere—they have a length and breadth often of nine or ten thousand miles, and sometimes (as in the case of the great solitary oval seen by Mayer and Gledhill) the extreme length of an oval cannot, after every allowance for possible exaggeration in the drawing, be computed at less than 30,000 miles. The regularity of their shape indicates that they are due to the operation of some cause at work below, and whose action, extending all around some central region, leads to a regular form, having, like the oval, a centre of symmetry. But the enormous size of the ovals indicates

that the centre of disturbance must lie very deep down. One cannot, indeed, fairly estimate its probable depth at less than thousands of miles. Now, if we ascribe each of the oval clouds, seen when a belt looks like a girdle of egg-shaped mouldings, to a region below the cloud-stratum, we should have to suppose a girdle of such regions; in other words, that the real surface of the planet was not only zoned by such regions of disturbance, but the zone divided regularly up into equidistant regions of disturbance alternating with regions of calm. This theory is not only improbable in itself, but, since we have seen that the existence of belts of cloud arises from the lagging of cloud-masses thrown up from lower depths, we perceive that there is no reason for supposing the real surface of Jupiter to be divided zone-wise, still less for supposing the zones to be at any time divided regularly along their length. The cloud-masses lying along different parts of a zone come thus to be regarded as owing their position, not to the position of the region of Jupiter's real surface immediately underlying them, but to the *time* when the vapours forming them were carried upwards from the neighbourhood of the true surface. A regular series of oval cloud-masses, then, would be explained simply as a series which had been formed over one and the same part of Jupiter's true surface, but at successive equal intervals of time, the causes leading to the upthrowing of the vapour being alternately active and quiescent. Now, we know that such uniform, or nearly uniform, alternation of activity and rest is a phenomenon frequently to be observed in terrestrial phenomena, and very readily to be explained. For the energetic action of any particular process in nature will bring about, by its very energy, the action of the reverse process, which, again, will bring the former into work, the two alternating with gradual diminution of intensity, just as a pendulum swung in one direction is by that very motion caused to swing in the opposite direction, then back again, until gradually the alternate motion is brought to an end.* So that this explanation of the occasional regular disposition of enormous oval cloud-masses in a zone girdling the whole frame of Jupiter, while corresponding well with conclusions to which we had been already led, is far simpler and better in accordance with observed phenomena than the idea of a series of equi-

* We see an interesting astronomical illustration of such alternate action in the formation of successive envelopes around the head of a comet. These are generally seen to be arranged with great uniformity, envelope within envelope, separated by well-marked interspaces of transparent matter; and they rise gradually from the nucleus, the outer envelopes disappearing, and new envelopes forming within. Now, the formation of the visible envelope implies a process of one kind (possibly condensation), while the transparent space between indicates a process of the reverse kind (possibly evaporation); so that the regular arrangement of envelopes and spaces shows that there must be an alternation of these processes at nearly uniform intervals. And though the forces causing either process are, so far as we can perceive, at work all the time, we can quite readily understand how first one, then the other, prevails, each by its very prevalence for a while bringing about conditions favourable to the prevalence of the other.

distant centres of disturbance around a zone of Jupiter's real surface. It should be added, as in our opinion placing the real nature and method of formation of Jupiter's belts beyond a peradventure, that the cloud-surface in different latitudes of the planet's globe turns round at different rates, the equatorial portion moving fastest. This, of course, could not be the case if we saw anywhere the real surface of the planet, or even if the depth of its atmosphere were small in proportion to the planet's apparent diameter.

Next we may note yet another remarkable feature which the earth must have presented to observers on other worlds during the first stage of our ocean's history. With an atmosphere so deep as she then had, in which many layers of cloud were floating at various depths, it could not but happen that from time to time such changes would take place, either by the rapid appearance or by the rapid disappearance of extensive cloud-masses at high levels, that her shape would seem to be distorted. Indeed, this is only supposing that from time to time high cloud-layers formed or vanished in a part of the earth's atmosphere chancing at the moment to form a portion of the *outline* of her visible disc, instead of forming part of a belt in the mid portions of the disc. Accordingly, to an observer viewing the earth from without, her shape would not always appear perfectly circular, or rather of that figure almost circular, but very slightly elliptical, which in those remote times, as now, must have corresponded to the proportions of her real globe. Cloud-layers floating very high in the earth's extensive atmosphere would cause her disc to bulge out slightly but perceptibly, if they chanced to be so placed as to form the outline of that disc, while regions where for a while the higher layers were wanting would (under the same circumstances) appear slightly depressed below the mean outline of the disc. It might very well happen that these irregularities would usually be too minute to be detected; that effect called irradiation, which slightly expands the apparent outline of every bright object seen on a dark background, would go far to hide such peculiarities. Yet sometimes they would be too marked, probably, to escape notice, supposing only the observer's station were well placed for the observation of the earth; as, for instance, if at that remote time there were creatures living on the moon, and able to examine the earth from that convenient distance. Especially when it chanced that raised portions of the earth's outline lay between two depressed portions, or a depressed portion between two raised portions, the observer would have a good opportunity of recognising the irregularity so resulting. He would perceive in one case that the outline had two somewhat flattened parts with a sort of corner between them, while in the second case there would be flattening between two corners. Of course, in neither case would the corners or the flattened parts be well marked; they would, in fact, only be just discernible by the most scrutinising observation. It might, however, have happened at times that whole zones of cloud-layers would lie higher than usual, while adjacent to them were zones where only the lower cloud-layers were

formed for the time being. During such periods the whole disc would appear out of shape, at least to very keen vision.

Now, precisely such peculiarities have been recognised in the case of Jupiter and Saturn, the two planets which, as already seen, we should expect from *a priori* considerations to be in the cloud-enveloped condition, and whose exceedingly small mean densities compel us either to believe that they are so, or else to adopt the conclusion that they are framed of materials quite different from those constituting our own earth. For that careful observer Schröter, the contemporary, and in some orders of observation the rival of Sir W. Herschel, notes that at times he could not but suspect that the outline of Jupiter was imperfectly rounded, being in places slightly flattened.* In the case of Saturn, not only have occasional local irregularities been noticed, but the planet has sometimes been observed to be for a time quite markedly out of shape, bulging out in the regions corresponding to the earth's temperate zones, and compressed (relatively) in the equatorial and polar regions. It would be easy to dismiss such observations as due to optical illusion if they had been made by mere amateurs. But Schröter was no amateur telescopist: few ever surpassed him in skill, and none in zeal and patience. The peculiarity in Saturn's figure, again, was first observed by Sir W. Herschel when at the height of his fame as a telescopist; and it has since been observed by such astronomers as Sir J. Herschel, Airy, the Bonds of Harvard (than whom no better observers ever lived), Coolidge, and many others, while the practised and certainly not imaginative workers at Greenwich Observatory have recorded, in the account of their year's work, that "this year Saturn has from time to time assumed the square-shouldered aspect." It is impossible to reject such testimony, though beyond all question the *normal* condition of Saturn is not the "square-shouldered," as some have supposed. It is certain, from multiplied observations and measurements, that Saturn usually presents the figure of a perfect ellipse, flattened like the earth at the poles, but in far greater degree. It is equally certain, therefore, that the square-shouldered aspect is but an occasional peculiarity. It is explained quite simply and naturally when we regard Saturn's real globe as deep

* It may, indeed, be noticed as remarkable that such a peculiarity, if it exists, has not been more commonly observed; but in reality it would be very readily overlooked and might even be altogether imperceptible with many telescopes superior to Schröter's. It was but a few years ago that certain irregularities of the moon's surface, so extensive as to modify her outline when they chance to be so placed as to form part of it, were detected by Mr. Cooper Key, though the moon must quite often have been observed at times when the peculiarity should have been noticed; and he detected the peculiarity by a process corresponding in fact to the spoiling of his telescope, at least temporarily. It was a silvered-glass reflector; and he removed the silvering so that the glass itself reflected the rays, but much less perfectly, of course, than the polished silver. He thus had a much fainter image of the moon, and, the effects of irradiation being removed, the flattening at the edge of the disc could be recognised. It is so great, when the moon is in one particular position, as to give two flat edges which would form sides of a twelve-sided polygon if the rest of the disc's outline were similarly shaped.

embosomed within his cloud-laden atmosphere—a view of the planet (we again and again repeat) which *à priori* considerations, as well as his exceedingly small apparent density, absolutely force upon us. On the other hand, those who reject as utterly incredible, or at least sensational, the belief that the giant planets are passing through a stage of planetary existence through which our earth has certainly passed, insisting on regarding all the planets as in the same stage of their existence notwithstanding the enormous *à priori* probabilities against such a supposition, are not only compelled at the very outset to adopt the opinion that Saturn and Jupiter must be formed of materials altogether unlike those constituting our earth—a view much more opposed to their theory of general resemblance than the one we have here indicated—but when observations such as those we have been describing are brought under their notice they are compelled either to reject them as optical illusions (an explanation which will account for anything), or else to adopt the conclusion that disturbances have taken place in the solid framework of a planet compared with which the most tremendous earthquakes would be the merest child's play. Thus their very preference of observation to theory, and of the ordinary to the sensational, forces them in this case either to reject multiplied observations as mere illusions, or to adopt a theory of planet disturbance which is not sensational merely, but utterly extravagant and incredible.

But in that remote period which we are considering, the waters of ocean, existing as mighty cloud-masses and borne aloft by the earth's deep atmosphere, must have caused the earth to present yet other peculiarities of appearance to observers, if such existed, who may have viewed her from the then young but now decrepit planets Mercury and Luna. Some of these we shall describe in the second part of this essay, and then briefly consider the evidence afforded by the present condition of the ocean respecting its past history.

"Virginibus Puerisque."

WITH the single exception of Falstaff, all Shakespeare's characters are what we call marrying men. Mercutio, as he was own cousin to Benedick and Biron, would have come to the same end in the long run. Even Iago had a wife, and, what is far stranger, he was jealous. People like Jacques and the Fool in *Lear*, although we can hardly imagine they would ever marry, kept single out of a cynical humour or for a broken heart, and not, as we do now-a-days, from a spirit of incredulity and preference for the single state. For that matter, if you turn to George Sand's French version of *As You Like It* (and I think I can promise you will like it but little), you will find Jacques marries Celia just as Orlando marries Rosalind.

At least there seems to have been much less hesitation over marriage in Shakespeare's days; and what hesitation there was was of a laughing sort, and not much more serious, one way or the other, than that of Panurge. In modern comedies the heroes are mostly of Benedick's way of thinking, but twice as much in earnest, and not one quarter so confident. And I take this diffidence as a proof of how sincere their terror is. They know they are only human after all; they know what gins and pitfalls lie about their feet; and how the shadow of matrimony waits, resolute and awful, at the cross-roads. They would wish to keep their liberty; but if that may not be, why, God's will be done! "What, are you afraid of marriage?" asks Cécile, in *Maitre Guérin*. "Oh, mon Dieu, non!" replies Arthur; "I should take chloroform." They look forward to marriage much in the same way as they prepare themselves for death: each seems inevitable; each is a great Perhaps, and a leap into the dark, for which, when a man is in the blue devils, he has specially to harden his heart. That splendid scoundrel, Maxime de Trailles, took the news of marriages much as an old man hears the deaths of his contemporaries. "C'est désespérant," he cried, throwing himself down in the arm-chair at Madame Schontz's; "c'est désespérant, nous nous marions tous!" Every marriage was like another grey hair on his head; and the jolly church bells seemed to taunt him with his fifty years and fair round belly.

The fact is, we are much more afraid of life than our ancestors, and cannot find it in our hearts either to marry or not to marry. Marriage is terrifying, but so is a cold and forlorn old age. The friendships of men are vastly agreeable, but they are insecure. You know all the

time that one friend will marry and put you to the door; a second accept a situation in China, and become no more to you than a name, a reminiscence, and an occasional crossed letter, very laborious to read; a third will take up with some religious crotchet and treat you to sour looks thenceforward. So, in one way or another, life forces men apart and breaks up the goodly fellowships for ever. The very flexibility and ease which make men's friendships so agreeable while they endure, make them the easier to destroy and forget. And a man who has a few friends, or one who has a dozen (if there be any one so wealthy on this earth), cannot forget on how precarious a base his happiness reposes; and how by a stroke or two of fate—a death, a few light words, a piece of stamped paper, a woman's bright eyes—he may be left, in a month, destitute of all. Marriage is certainly a perilous remedy. Instead of on two or three, you stake your happiness on one life only. But still, as the bargain is more explicit and complete on your part, it is more so on the other; and you have not to fear so many contingencies; it is not every wind that can blow you from your anchorage; and, so long as death withholds his sickle, you will always have a friend at home. People who share a cell in the Bastille, or are thrown together on an uninhabited isle, if they do not immediately fall to fisticuffs, will find some possible ground of compromise. They will learn each other's ways and humours, so as to know where they must go warily, and where they may lean their whole weight. The discretion of the first years becomes the settled habit of the last; and so, with wisdom and patience, two lives may grow indissolubly into one.

But marriage, if comfortable, is not at all heroic. It certainly narrows and damps the spirits of generous men. In marriage, a man becomes slack and selfish, and undergoes a fatty degeneration of his moral being. It is not only when Ladgate misallies himself with Rosamond Vinney, but when Ladislaw marries above him with Dorothea, that this may be exemplified. The air of the fireside withers out all the fine wildings of the husband's heart. He is so comfortable and happy that he begins to prefer comfort and happiness to everything else on earth, his wife included. Yesterday he would have shared his last shilling; to-day "his first duty is to his family," and is fulfilled in large measure by laying down vintages and husbanding the health of an invaluable parent. Twenty years ago this man was equally capable of crime or heroism; now he is fit for neither. His soul is asleep, and you may speak without constraint; you will not wake him. It is not for nothing that Don Quixote was a bachelor and Marcus Aurelius married ill. For women, there is less of this danger. Marriage is of so much use to a woman, opens out to her so much more of life, and puts her in the way of so much more freedom and usefulness, that, whether she marry ill or well, she can hardly miss some benefit. It is true, however, that some of the merriest and most genuine of women are old maids; and that those old maids, and wives who are unhappily married, have often most

of the true motherly touch. And this would seem to show, even for women, some narrowing influence in comfortable married life. But the rule is none the less certain : if you wish the pick of men and women, take a good bachelor and a good wife.

I am often filled with wonder that so many marriages are passably successful, and so few come to open failure, the more so as I fail to understand the principle on which people regulate their choice. I see women marrying indiscriminately with staring burgesses and ferret-faced, white-eyed boys, and men dwell in contentment with noisy scullions, or taking into their lives acidulous vestals. It is a common answer to say the good people marry because they fall in love; and of course you may use and misuse a word as much as you please, if you have the world along with you. But love is at least a somewhat hyperbolical expression for such lukewarm preference. It is not here, anyway, that Love employs his golden shafts; he cannot be said, with any fitness of language, to reign here and revel. Indeed, if this be love at all, it is plain the poets have been fooling with mankind since the foundation of the world. And you have only to look these happy couples in the face, to see they have never been in love, or in hate, or in any other high passion, all their days. When you see a dish of fruit at dessert, you sometimes set your affections upon one particular peach or nectarine, watch it with some anxiety as it comes round the table, and feel quite a sensible disappointment when it is taken by some one else. I have used the phrase "high passion." Well, I should say this was about as high a passion as generally leads to marriage. One husband hears after marriage that some poor fellow is dying of his wife's love. "What a pity!" he exclaims; "you know I could so easily have got another!" And yet that is a very happy union. Or again: A young man was telling me the sweet story of his loves. "I like it well enough as long as her sisters are there," said this amorous swain; "but I don't know what to do when we're alone." Once more: A married lady was debating the subject with another lady. "You know, dear," said the first, "after ten years of marriage, if he is nothing else, your husband is always an old friend." "I have many old friends," returned the other, "but I prefer them to be nothing more." "Oh, perhaps I might *prefer* that also!" There is a common note in these three illustrations of the modern idyll; and it must be owned the god goes among us with a limping gait and bleary eyes. You wonder whether it was so always; whether desire was always equally dull and spiritless, and possession equally cold. I cannot help fancying most people make, ere they marry, some such table of recommendations as Hannah Godwin wrote to her brother William anent her friend, Miss Gay. It is so charmingly comical, and so pat to the occasion, that I must quote a few phrases. "The young lady is in every sense formed to make one of your disposition really happy. She has a pleasing voice, with which she accompanies her musical instrument with judgment. She has an easy politeness in her manners,

neither free nor reserved. She is a good housekeeper and a good economist, and yet of a generous disposition. As to her internal accomplishments, I have reason to speak still more highly of them: good sense without vanity, a penetrating judgment without a disposition to satire, with about as much religion as my William likes, struck me with a wish that she was my William's wife." That is about the tune: pleasing voice, moderate good looks, unimpeachable internal accomplishments after the style of the copy-book, with about as much religion as my William likes; and then, with all speed, to church.

To deal plainly, if they only married when they fell in love, most people would die unwed; and, among the others, there would be not a few tumultuous households. The Lion is the King of Beasts, but he is scarcely suitable for a domestic pet. In the same way, I suspect love is rather too violent a passion to make, in all cases, a good domestic sentiment. Like other violent excitements, it throws up not only what is best, but what is worst and smallest, in men's characters. Just as some people are malicious in drink, or brawling and virulent under the influence of religious feeling, some are moody, jealous, and exacting when they are in love, who are honest, downright, good-hearted fellows enough in the everyday affairs and humours of the world.

How then, seeing we are driven to the hypothesis that people choose in comparatively cold blood, how is it they choose so well? One is almost tempted to hint that it does not much matter whom you marry; that, in fact, marriage is a subjective affection, and if you have made up your mind to it, and once talked yourself fairly over, you could "pull it through" with anybody. But even if we take matrimony at its lowest, even if we regard it as no more than a sort of friendship recognised by the police, there must be degrees in the freedom and sympathy realised, and some principle to guide simple folk in their selection. Now what should this principle be? Are there no more definite rules than are to be found in the Prayer-book? Law and religion forbid the bans on the ground of propinquity or consanguinity; society steps in to separate classes; and in all this most critical matter, has common sense, has wisdom, never a word to say? In the absence of more magisterial teaching, let us talk it over between friends: even a few guesses may be of interest to youths and maidens.

In all that concerns eating and drinking, company, climate, and ways of life, community of taste is to be sought for. It would be trying, for instance, to keep bed and board with an early riser or a vegetarian. In matters of art and intellect, I believe it is of no consequence. Certainly it is of none in the companionships of men, who will dine more readily with one who has a good heart, a good cellar, and a humorous tongue, than with another who shares all their favourite hobbies and is melancholy withal. If your wife likes Tupper, that is no reason why you should hang your head. She thinks with the majority, and has the courage of her opinions. I have always suspected public taste to be a mongrel pro-

duct, out of affectation by dogmatism ; and felt sure, if you could only find an honest man of no special literary bent, he would tell you he thought much of Shakespeare bombastic and most absurd, and all of him written in very obscure English and wearisome to read. And not long ago I was able to lay by my lanthorn in content, for I found the honest man. He was a fellow of parts, quick, humorous, a clever painter, and with an eye for certain poetical effects of sea and ships. I am not much a judge of that kind of thing, but a sketch of his comes before me sometimes at night. How strong, supple, and living the ship seems upon the billows ! With what a dip and rake she shears the flying sea ! I cannot fancy the man who saw this effect, and took it on the wing with so much force and spirit, was what you call commonplace in the last recesses of the heart. And yet he thought, and was not ashamed to have it known of him, that Ouida was better in every way than William Shakespeare. If there were more people of his honesty, this would be about the staple of lay criticism. It is not taste that is plentiful, but courage that is rare. And what have we in place ? How many, who think no otherwise than the young painter, have we not heard disbursing second-hand hyperboles ? Have you never turned sick at heart, O best of critics ! when some of your own sweet adjectives were returned on you before a gaping audience ? Enthusiasm about art is become a function of the average female being, which she performs with precision and a sort of haunting sprightliness, like an ingenious and well-regulated machine. Sometimes, alas ! the calmest man is carried away in the torrent, bandies adjectives with the best, and out-Herods Herod for some shameful moments. When you remember that, you will be tempted to put things strongly, and say you will marry no one who is not like George the Second, and can state openly a distaste for poetry and painting.

The word "facts" is, in some ways, crucial. I have spoken with Jesuits and Plymouth Brethren, mathematicians and poets, dogmatic republicans and dear old gentlemen in bird's-eye neckcloths ; and each understood the word "facts" in an occult sense of his own. Try as I might, I could get no nearer the principle of their division. What was essential to them, seemed to me trivial or untrue. We could come to no compromise as to what was, or what was not, important in the life of man. Turn as we pleased, we all stood back to back in a big ring, and saw another quarter of the heavens, with different mountain-tops along the sky-line, and different constellations overhead. We had each of us some whimsy in the brain, which we believed more than anything else, and which discoloured all experience to its own shade. How would you have people agree, when one is deaf and the other blind ? Now this is where there should be community between man and wife. They should be agreed on their catchword in "*facts of religion*," or "*facts of science*," or "*society, my dear* ;" for without such an agreement all intercourse is a painful strain upon the mind. "About as much religion as my William likes," in short, that is what is necessary to make a happy couple of any

William and his spouse. For there are differences which no habit nor affection can reconcile, and the Bohemian must not intermarry with the Pharisee. Imagine Consuelo as Mrs. Samuel Budget, the wife of the successful merchant! The best of men and the best of women may sometimes live together all their lives, and, for want of some consent on fundamental questions, hold each other lost spirits to the end.

A certain sort of talent is almost indispensable for people who would spend years together and not bore themselves to death. But the talent, like the agreement, must be for and about life. To dwell happily together, they should be versed in the niceties of the heart, and born with a faculty for willing compromise. The woman must be talented as a woman, and it will not much matter although she is talented in nothing else. She must know her *métier de femme*, and have a fine touch for the affections. And it is more important that a person should be a good gossip, and talk pleasantly and smartly of common friends and the thousand and one nothings of the day and hour, than that she should speak with the tongues of men and angels; for a while together by the fire, happens more frequently in marriage than the presence of a distinguished foreigner to dinner. That people should laugh over the same sort of jests, and have many a story of "grouse in the gun-room," many an old joke between them which time cannot wither nor custom stale, is a better preparation for life, by your leave, than many other things higher and better sounding in the world's ears. You could read Kant by yourself, if you wanted; but you must share a joke with some one else. You can forgive people who do not follow you through a philosophical disquisition; but to find your wife laughing when you had tears in your eyes, or staring when you were in a fit of laughter, would go some way towards a dissolution of the marriage. I know a woman who, from some distaste or disability, could never so much as understand the meaning of the word politics, and has given up trying to distinguish Whigs from Tories; but take her on her own politics, ask her about other men or women and the chicanery of everyday existence—the rubs, the tricks, the vanities on which life turns—and you will not find many more shrewd, trenchant, and humorous. Nay, to make plainer what I have in mind, this same woman has a share of the higher and more poetical understanding, frank interest in things for their own sake, and enduring astonishment at the most common. She is not to be deceived by custom, or made to think a mystery solved when it is repeated. I have heard her say she could wonder herself crazy over the human eyebrow. Now in a world where most of us walk very contentedly in the little-lit circle of their own reason, and have to be reminded of what lies without by specious and clamant exceptions—earthquakes, eruptions of Vesuvius, banjos floating in mid air at a *séance*, and the like—a mind so fresh and unsophisticated is no despicable gift. I will own I think it a better sort of mind than goes necessarily with the clearest views on public business. It will wash. It will find something to say at an odd moment. It has in it

the spring of pleasant and quaint fancies. Whereas I can imagine myself yawning all night long until my jaws ached and the tears came into my eyes, although my companion on the other side of the hearth held the most enlightened opinions on the franchise or the ballot.

The question of professions, in as far as they regard marriage, was only interesting to women until of late days, but it touches all of us now. Certainly, if I could help it, I would never marry a wife who wrote. The practice of letters is miserably harassing to the mind; and after an hour or two's work, all the more human portion of the author is extinct; he will bully, backbite, and speak daggers. Music, I hear, is not much better. But painting, on the contrary, is often highly sedative; because so much of the labour, after your picture is once begun, is almost entirely manual, and of that skilled sort of manual labour which offers a continual series of successes, and so tickles a man, through his vanity, into good humour. Alas! in letters there is nothing of this sort. You may write as beautiful a hand as you will, you have always something else to think of, and cannot pause to notice your loops and flourishes; they are beside the mark, and the first law stationer could put you to the blush. Rousseau, indeed, made some account of penmanship, even made it a source of livelihood, when he copied out the *Héloïse* for dilettante ladies; and therein showed that strange eccentric prudence which guided him among so many thousand follies and insanities. It would be well for all of the *genus irritabile* thus to add something of skilled labour to intangible brainwork. To find the right word is so doubtful a success and lies so near to failure, that there is no satisfaction in a year of it; but we all know when we have formed a letter perfectly; and a stupid artist, right or wrong, is almost equally certain he has found a right tone or a right colour, or made a dexterous stroke with his brush. And, again, painters may work out of doors; and the fresh air, the deliberate seasons, and the "tranquillizing influence" of the green earth, counterbalance the fever of thought, and keep them cool, placable, and prosaic.

A ship captain is a good man to marry if it is a marriage of love, for absences are a good influence in love and keep it bright and delicate; but he is just the worst man if the feeling is more pedestrian, as habit is too frequently torn open and the solder has never time to set. Men who fish, botanise, work with the turning-lathe, or gather sea-weeds will make admirable husbands; and a little amateur painting in water-colour shows the innocent and quiet mind. Those who have a few intimates are to be avoided; while those who swim loose, who have their hat in their hand all along the street, who can number an infinity of acquaintances and are not chargeable with any one friend, promise an easy disposition and no rival to the wife's influence. I will not say they are the best of men, but they are the stuff out of which adroit and capable women manufacture the best of husbands.

It is to be noticed that those who have loved once or twice already are so much the better educated to a woman's hand; the bright boy of fiction is an odd and most uncomfortable mixture of shyness and coarseness, and needs a deal of civilising. Lastly (and this is, perhaps, the golden rule), no woman should marry a teetotaller, or a man who does not smoke. It is not for nothing that this "ignoble tabagie," as Michelet calls it, spreads over all the world. Michelet rails against it because it renders you happy apart from thought or work; to provident women this will seem no evil influence in married life. Whatever keeps a man in the front garden, whatever checks wandering fancy and all inordinate ambition, whatever makes for lounging and contentment, makes just so surely for domestic happiness.

These notes, if they amuse the reader at all, will probably amuse him more when he differs than when he agrees with them; at least they will do no harm, for nobody will follow my advice. But the last word is of more concern. Marriage is a step so grave and decisive that it attracts light-headed, variable men by its very awfulness. They have been so tried among the inconstant squalls and currents, so often sailed for islands in the air or lain becalmed with burning heart, that they will risk all for solid ground below their feet. Desperate pilots, they run their sea-sick, weary bark upon the dashing rocks. It seems as if marriage were the royal road through life, and realised, on the instant, what we have all dreamed on summer Sundays when the bells ring, or at night when we cannot sleep for the desire of living. They think it will sober and change them. Like those who join a brotherhood, they fancy it needs but an act to be out of the coil and clamour for ever. But this is a wile of the devil's. To the end, spring winds will sow disquietude, passing faces leave a regret behind them, and the whole world keep calling and calling in their ears. For marriage is like life in this—that it is a field of battle, and not a bed of roses.

R. L. S.

Jitsu-go-Kipō.

(THE TEACHING OF THE WORDS OF TRUTH.)

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THE authorship, or rather the compilation, of the following maxims is popularly ascribed to the Buddhist priest Kū-kai, better known in Japan by his posthumous name of Kō-bō-dai-shi (the great teacher who spread the doctrines), who flourished in the early part of the ninth century of our era. He brought back from India, whither he had gone to study the sacred books in the original, a knowledge of the Sanscrit alphabet, and is said to have invented the Japanese syllabary, as well as to have founded temples and performed miracles innumerable. There is a tradition that he never died, but merely retired into a tomb, telling his disciples that they must call him if ever they should be in trouble, and he would arise and help them.

Internal evidence would tend to show that the "teaching of the words of truth," even if originally framed by the "great teacher," cannot, in its present form, be his actual handiwork. Moreover, so popular a hero is this old Buddhist saint, that any great miracle, any useful invention, any holy book, would naturally, in the lapse of time, be attributed to him.

Be this as it may, an insight into the moral teaching inculcated into the minds of Japanese children will perhaps be not without interest to the English reader. Buddhism, it is true, is dying away in the educated centres, and is not replaced by any other faith; but in many a country hamlet the words of the ancient priest still live in the hearts of the simple folk, like the fire on the summit of the Sacred Island of the Inland Sea, which has never been suffered to burn out since the day when it was first lighted by the hand of the "great teacher" more than a thousand years ago.

A mountain is not prized for its height: it is prized for the trees which grow upon it.

A man is not prized for his corpulence: he is prized for the wisdom which is in him.

Riches are a possession only while life endureth: when the body perisheth, they perish with it.

Wisdom is a possession for ten thousand generations: its fame lasteth beyond the life of him that was wise.*

* The original of this paragraph is obscure; but this is the explanation given by the native commentators.

If a gem be not polished it will have no lustre : a gem that hath no lustre is an useless stone.

If a man study not, he will have no wisdom : a man that hath not wisdom is a fool.

Treasures that are laid up in a garner decay : treasures that are laid up in the mind decay not.

Though thou shouldst heap up a thousand pieces of gold : they would not be so precious as one day of study.

Brethren rarely agree together : let love and pity be thy brethren.

Treasures are not lasting : let wisdom be thy treasure.

The four great elements decay day by day : and the spirit is darkened night by night.*

If thou study not earnestly in the days of thy childhood : thy regrets in old age will be all unavailing.

Therefore weary not of reading the scriptures : nor be ever careless in the pursuit of learning.

Banish sleep, and spend the night in recitations : endure hunger, and be learning the livelong day.

If thou meet a teacher and learn nothing from him : it is as though thou hadst only passed by a stranger in the market-place.

If thou learn and read, and digest not what thou readest : it is as though thou hadst only counted over thy neighbour's treasures.

The superior man loveth him that hath wisdom : the mean man loveth him that hath riches.

If thou, being poor, enter into the abode of the wealthy : remember that his riches are more fleeting than the flower nipped by the hoar-frost.

If thou be born in the poor man's hovel, but have wisdom : then wilt thou be like the lotus-flower growing out of the mud.

Thy father and thy mother are like heaven and earth : thy teacher and thy lord are like the sun and moon.

Other relations may be likened unto the rushes : husbands and wives are but as useless stones.†

* This is an introduction to the succeeding paragraph. The sense is : " Every day that we live we are getting nearer to old age and to death, as the four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind), of which our bodies are composed, tend daily more to dissolution ; our intellects, too, will soon be clouded." The expression " night by night," is merely antithetical to " day by day," and has no special reference to the subject treated.

† In Japan no virtue is so much esteemed as filial piety and fidelity to a master. The passages in the New Testament which speak slightly of parents, and put other duties before that of filial piety, are the greatest of all stumbling-blocks in the way of the acceptance of Christianity by the Japanese, and are eagerly seized hold of by those native controversialists who are unfavourable to our religion. Nothing in Japanese

Be ministering to thy father and thy mother from morn till eve : be serving thy teacher and thy lord both day and night.

Be not contentious among friends.

To him that is thine elder brother, be polite and respectful : to him that is as thy younger brother, be kind and tender:

A man that hath not wisdom : differeth not from the stocks and stones.

A man that hath not filial piety : differeth not from the beasts.

If thou cultivate not the friendship of those that practise the three precepts : how shalt thou disport thyself in the forest of the seven virtues ? *

If thou sail not in the ship of the four equal † perfections : how shalt thou cross the sea of the eight ‡ tribulations ?

The road of the eight § correctnesses is broad : but they that are guilty of the ten || iniquities shall not tread it.

eyes, could exceed the impiety of the text commanding men to leave their fathers and mothers and cleave to their wives.

* The three precepts are :—

I. Keep the commandments.

II. Subdue the passions.

III. Practise benevolence.

The seven virtues are :—

I. Carefulness.

IV. Repressing anger.

II. Choosing the truth.

V. Tranquillity of mind.

III. Fasting.

VI. Subduing the passions.

VII. Abandoning the world.

There would seem to be a slight want of logic in this paragraph, as the second precept is identical with the sixth virtue. This is, however, only so in appearance ; to endeavour to obey the precept, and to have actually attained to the virtue, are two very different things.

† The four equal perfections are :—

I. Compassion.

III. Tranquillity of mind.

II. Benevolence.

IV. Poverty.

‡ The eight tribulations are :—

I. Birth.

V. Parting from friends.

II. Old age.

VI. Disappointment.

III. Sickness.

VII. Persecution.

IV. Death.

VIII. Decrepitude.

§ The eight correctnesses are :—

I. Looking correctly.

V. Ordering correctly.

II. Thinking "

VI. Fasting "

III. Speaking "

VII. Taking care "

IV. Acting "

VIII. Subduing the passions correctly.

|| The ten iniquities are thus classed :—

Three iniquities of the flesh, viz. :

I. Murder.

II. Theft.

III. Adultery.

Four iniquities of the mouth :

IV. Equivocation.

V. Insult.

VI. Lying.

VII. Derision.

Three iniquities of the heart :

VIII. Envy.

IX. Anger.

X. Folly.

The city* of rest is delightful : but the profligate shall not taste its joys.

Revere the aged as though they were thy father and thy mother : love the young as though they were thy children or thy younger brethren.

If thou honourest others : others in like manner will honour thee.

If thou honourest others' parents : by others in like manner will thy parents be honoured.

If thou desire to advance thyself : then first of all help others to advance.

If thou see others lamenting : then oughtest thou to join in their lamentations.

If thou hear others rejoicing : then oughtest thou to join in their joy.

When thou seest righteousness, speedily follow after it : when thou seest iniquity, instantly flee from its presence.

He that loveth iniquity, beckoneth to misfortune : it is, as it were, the echo answering to the voice.

He that practiseth righteousness, receiveth a blessing : it cometh as surely as the shadow followeth after the man.

Though thou shouldst be rich, forget not the poor : some are now poor which were rich.

Though thou shouldst be exalted, forget not the lowly : some which were exalted are now fallen low.

The trivial accomplishment of singing : is hard to learn and easy to forget.

The grand art of writing : is easy to learn and hard to forget.

As there is food, so there are rules concerning it : † as there is the body, so there is the spirit.

Therefore be not neglectful of agriculture : nor ever cease from study.

Let all students, then, to the end of time : commence by pondering this book.

This is the beginning of study : neither forget it whilst thou hast life.

* Paradise.

† The meaning of this somewhat obscure paragraph would seem to be this : "Follow the rules by which food is obtained for the body : tend the body in order to support the spirit." The double connection with the next paragraph then becomes apparent.

The Oera Linda Book.

WE are accustomed to pride ourselves on the progress that we have made during the past century in the matter of critical insight. Without doubt the elements of technical knowledge are more widely spread than they were in the days of George Psalmanazar. We no longer believe in the highly-polished mahogany-coloured old masters that our forefathers cherished; we have reduced our belief in the music of the ancients to scientific limits; but it is questionable, after all, whether we are much less in thrall to tradition, or much more ready to give an independent opinion on an undiscussed subject, than our ancestors of the eighteenth century were. In the particular matter of literary forgeries, it is hard to say positively whether our generation would or would not be deceived by the productions of a Chatterton or a Walpole, whose skill and learning were in due ratio advanced beyond the average culture of a hundred years ago. It is more a question, perhaps, of ingenuity in the forger than of intuition in the reader. A blunderer like Ireland is detected almost at once; and there has never, in all probability, been a believer in *Vortigern* since the solitary performance of that unique drama. On the other hand there are still people of education and taste who uphold the comedies of the Terentian nun Hroswitha, and pin their faith to the antiquity of Clotilde de Surville. These celebrated productions may be said to reach the high-water mark of intelligent forgery; their inherent value is so great that there may always be admirers too blind to be critical. But it is one thing to be delighted with a *rondeau* like "Au clair de lune," and another to be taken in by a *History of Formosa* in the language of that island. Yet there is just now being circulated and discussed throughout the learned societies of the North of Europe a hoax that bears a remarkable likeness to the geographical and linguistical revelations of the mysterious Mr. George Psalmanazar.

The *Oera Linda Book*—which, from being translated out of Frisian into Dutch and German, has now been exalted into an English translation, and which is expected by its faithful band of admirers to be about to revolutionize the history of Europe—has had a variety of evasive stages in its long and singular history. As at present published it is understood to be taken from a MS. of the thirteenth century, and its more rational adherents no longer seek to claim for it a greater antiquity. But when it first appeared on the scenes, and indeed still in Friesland itself, no more modest pretensions were put forth on its behalf than that it was "the oldest production, after Homer and Hesiod, of

European literature." It can be imagined what excitement has been caused by the sudden appearance on the quiet horizon of Frisian letters of a meteor so portentous as this. It is well known that the industrious and intelligent inhabitants of the north-eastern provinces of Holland preserve in remarkable purity the old Frisian language; and that, though Dutch has superseded it in the towns and in business relations, yet that a strong conservative process is going on there as elsewhere in Europe, having for its object a patriotic preservation of the national language, laws, and customs. The capital of this peculiar district, Leeuwarden, boasts a variety of Frisian institutions, and the strength of feeling and the literary activity of the people has been more obvious than their critical acumen in this wordy warfare about the *Oera Linda Book*. Friesland is by no means ready to allow itself to be snuffed out by its wealthier and more influential neighbours. It claims for itself and its language all the dignity due to a most ancient noble stock fallen into decay. It produces learned little books, intended as trumpet-blasts to waken alumbering philology, and bearing such titles as the *Old Frisic above all others the Fons et Origo of the Old English, and Archaic*—little books which are too apt to give an uncertain sound when the supreme moment of trumpeting arrives. Friesland, moreover, does not forget that it has twice contributed a great name to European poetry and art: in the sixteenth century, Gijsbert Japix; in the nineteenth, Laurence Alma Tadema. In the ferment of patriotic feeling it becomes quite a sin against the fatherland not to believe in any great memorial of the national glory. As we shall see, if only the *Oera Linda Book* were trustworthy, Greece and Egypt and Rome would be obliged to come down from their pedestals of honour, and do obeisance. Friesland is thirsty after national glory, and a MS. suddenly appears, showering a whole deity of magnificence into the lap of its respectable and sleepy history. That it should be difficult to be critical under such circumstances is pardonable; and yet the *Oera Linda Book* might have taxed our credulity a little less. With the sincerest affection for Friesland, this is too much: "Hitherto we have believed that the historical records of our people reach no farther back than the arrival of Friso, the presumptive founder of the Frisians; whereas here we become aware that their records mount up to more than 2,000 years before Christ, surpassing the antiquity of Hellas, and equalling that of Israel!" This is a quotation from a paper read by a well-known scholar before a meeting of the Frisian Society, at Leeuwarden, in 1871, and warmly commended by all present. These are big words, and we cannot do better than examine the document on which their assumptions are founded.

In the first place, the publisher of the *Oera Linda Book* has an advantage over Mr. Macpherson and other producers of strange works, in that the ancient MS. from which he took his text has not been burned to ashes at the moment when the task of transcription was complete, or been stolen and destroyed by some person ignorant of its value,

or even carried up into heaven by a young gentleman with wings, as befell the hapless golden books of the Mormons. None of these unfortunate accidents has arrived to baffle students of primeval Frisian history. The *Oera Linda* MS. remains in the possession of Mr. C. Over de Linden, Chief Superintendent of the Royal Dockyard at the Helder. Some rather scrappy information has been published, from which we gather that the present possessor received the MS., in August, 1848 (we are very particular about dates), from his aunt, Mrs. Aafje Meylhoff, who had preserved it for twenty-eight years in her house at Enkhuizen, in Friesland. This takes us back to 1820; and we learn that on April 15 of that year it was delivered to Mrs. Meylhoff, then Miss Aafje Over de Linden, by her father, Mr. Andries Over de Linden, at his death. Here the chain breaks, and we are blandly told that the document had been handed down to the last-named gentleman by generation after generation from time immemorial. The tradition of the great antiquity of this record seems to have been accepted by the family; but no attempt was made to decipher or analyse it until Dr. E. Verwijs requested permission, about ten years ago, to examine the MS. He, we are told, "immediately recognised it as very ancient Fries." A letter at the commencement, which we shall presently examine, gave the year 1256 as that of the present copy, attributing the actual composition to a certain Adela, who lived and wrote about twenty centuries and a half before the Christian era, and to some other persons of a less extreme antiquity. This record, consequently, assumes to be 3,900 years old in its contents, and to belong to the thirteenth century in its present and physical form. It is a large quarto volume, of cotton paper, and written upon with large uncial letters in a previously unknown, but easy and consistent, alphabet. As a specimen of thoroughly intelligent modern criticism, we quote at this juncture some remarks by the Frisian enthusiast, Dr. Ottema, who first saw the book through the press:—

In old writings the ink is very black or brown; but while there has been more writing since the thirteenth century, the colour of the ink is often grey or yellowish, and sometimes quite pale, showing that it contains iron. All this affords convincing proof that the manuscript before us belongs to the middle of the thirteenth century, written with clear black letters between fine lines carefully traced with lead. The colour of the ink shows decidedly that it does not contain iron. By these evidences the date given, 1256, is satisfactorily proved, and it is impossible to assign any later date. Therefore all suspicion of modern deception vanishes.

Was there ever such a sweet simplicity in any man since that poor dear Abbé blinded himself in deciphering the scribblings of a German schoolboy in the Mexican Cave! Here is a man after Horace Walpole's own heart. Dr. Ottema is a phenomenon in the modern life of a European philosopher. He ought to have been a don at Oxford when George Psalmanazar was made Professor of Formosa. We return again and again to this reminiscence. There seems to us no parallel in literary history closer than that between the eighteenth-century *History*

of *Formosa* and this *Pre-historic Chronicle of Friesland* in our own days; and when we find Dr. Ottema saying, as he does, "As a specimen of antiquity in language and writing, I believe I may venture to say that this book is unique of its kind," we cannot help pausing to call his attention to that earlier and once so famous masterpiece.

The letter which claims 1256 as the date of the MS., and which all the Frisian scholars point to with especial insistence, it may be as well to quote here in full and literal translation :—

OKKE, MY SON,—

These books thou must preserve with body and soul. They contain the history of all our folk and of our ancestors. Last year I saved them out of the flood with thee and thy mother. Then they became wetted; they in consequence began to perish. In order not to lose them I have copied them on to foreign paper (*vp wrlandsk pampyer*). In case thou inheritest them, thou also must copy them. Thy children also, that they may never be destroyed.

Written at Ljuwert. After Atland sank the three thousand four hundred and forty-ninth year; that is, after Christian reckoning, the twelve hundred six and fiftieth year.

(Signed) HIDDE, surnamed OERA LINDA. Watch.

Below this, and, as far as we can discover, written on the same paper, is a letter dated four hundred years earlier. This also has a peculiar importance. It reads as follows :—

BELoved SUCCESSORS,—

For the sake of our dear forefathers, and of our dear liberty, I entreat you a thousand times never let the eye of a monk look on these writings. They are very insinuating, but they destroy in an underhand way all that relates to us Frisians. In order to gain rich benefices, they conspire with foreign kings, who know that we are their greatest enemies because we dare to speak to their people of liberty, rights, and duties of princes. Therefore they seek to destroy all that we derive from our forefathers, and all that is left of our old customs.

Ah! my beloved ones! I have visited their courts! If *Wr-alda* permits it, and we do not show ourselves strong to resist, they will altogether exterminate us.

Written at Ljudwerd. Eight hundred and three years after Christ.

Liko, surnamed OVIRA LINDA.

It will be noticed that an air of superior archaism is introduced by the spelling of the signature, *Ovira Linda*, in 803, becoming *Oera Linda* in 1256. Unfortunately this difference of language is not kept up consistently, exactly the same forms and the same spelling occurring in the first document as in the last; this paradox being the result, that during the four centuries in which the Gothic languages were undergoing the most rapid and complete transfiguration, the Frisian dialect alone preserved its forms with inflexible rigidity; which is absurd.

The narrative is opened with very considerable ingenuity. In order to avoid the awkwardness of an introduction we are suddenly plunged into the middle of things. Adela, the priestess-prophetess, is discoursing, and we learn from her words that a crisis has just taken place in the Frisian polity. The commander Magy, for whose name an ingenious Dutch

note accounts by saying "King of the Magjars or Finns," has murdered the Folksmother, or female president of the Frisian Commonwealth. On this deed of violence other misfortunes have followed, and the same "Magjars or Finns" have wrested from Friesland all the lands beyond the Weser. To stem the tide of conquest, and to consider in what way best to prevent the total extinction of the Frisian power, a council is called of the sovereign women and the men who hold office under them. We see at once that we have before us the curious idea of a republic governed by august maidens. At this council Adela rises and demands a hearing, and recapitulates for the benefit of her people, and for our amusement, the various matters that follow. She opens with a denunciation of the infidel policy which has disregarded the commands of the tutelary goddess Frya, and has negligently relaxed those god-given laws on which the whole framework of the community subsists. She harangues the assembly with very considerable eloquence, and charges the maidens to carry out instant reforms. They are to visit all the citadels, and to write down the Laws of Frya on the walls of each. The internal machinery of government is to be subdivided and put into full working order, and this significant exhortation is subjoined :—

If I might add more, I would recommend that all respectable girls in the towns should be taught; for I say positively, and time will show it, that if you wish to remain true children of Frya, never to be vanquished by fraud or arms, you must take care to bring up your daughters as true Frya's daughters.

And this, which sounds sweet in the ears of Leeuwarden to-day :—

You must teach the children how great our country has been, what great men our forefathers were, how great we still are if we compare ourselves to others.

Adela's advice, we are told, was followed, and a tedious list of apparently meaningless names is added in due course. Then an account is given of the earliest history of Friesland: how Wr-alda, the Infinitely Old, the only eternal and good God, breathed upon the earth so that she brought forth three maiden daughters, Lyda the fierce, Finda the sweet-voiced and treacherous, and Frya the mild and beneficent. The description of Frya has a real charm of style in it. Her body is of the colour of snow at sunrise. Her hair, as fine as a spider's web, shines like the sun itself. When she opens her lips, the birds stop singing, and not a leaf rustles in the forest; the lion lies down at her feet, and the asp forgets its poison. She has three lessons for her children: the first is self-control, and the second the love of virtue, and the third the value of freedom; for, she says, "Without liberty all other virtues serve to make you slaves." When she had gathered around her her children to the seventh generation, she was taken suddenly up to heaven and made divine. Her children were gathered around her, when suddenly she was not. The earth shook, the air grew black and leaf-green with tears, and at last, as they gazed upwards, they saw the lightning flash out for one moment the word "Watch"

written across the firmament. Her children consoled themselves by building a great citadel, on which they wrote her laws, called the *Tex*. They are the Frisians of this wondrous history.

After this prologue the Laws themselves, Frya's *Tex*, are given in full. Here the *Oera Linda Book* challenges comparison with the most important fragment of genuine mediæval Frisian which we possess—the Old Laws of Friesland, put down at various times during the Middle Ages, but all claiming to have been originally drawn up by Charlemagne. There is no doubt whatever of the genuine authenticity of these very remarkable documents; and in point of style they resemble, sometimes very closely, this primeval *Tex* of Frya. The Old Frisian Laws were printed so early as the end of the fifteenth century; again revived, they were published by Christian Schotanus, in 1664, in his *Description of the Glory of Friesland*. More than a century elapsed before they were printed again; and then they appeared in the form which I have before me at this moment, printed at Campen and Leeuwarden, in 1782, by J. A. de Chalmot and J. Seydel. This edition of the Old Frisian Laws is worthy of some note; it might even suggest itself to a sceptical mind to inquire whether this volume was not the real nucleus and “fons et origo,” to use the true Frisian phrase, of Adela and Frya and the whole structure of the *Oera Linda Book*.

It must be understood, however, that the compilers of the Old Laws knew no such strange gods as Linda and Wr-alda. Their straightforward statement, on the contrary, opens thus:—“To the honour of God, of his dear mother Mary, and of the whole heavenly host, and of all free Frisian freedom.” These last words, on which much interesting speculation might be founded, reveal to us a high level of national vitality at that early period. The sturdy alliterativeness, *alre fria Fresena fridam*, has in itself the ring of a watchword, and a noble music of liberty in it. Again and again it is repeated, and throughout the code *Di fria Fresa*, the free Frisian, is invariably used for citizen or inhabitant.

Either this characteristic is of an infinite age, or the *Oera Linda* has cunningly borrowed it, for the *Tex* abounds in such spirited enactments as this:—

If any man shall deprive another, even his debtor, of his liberty, let him be to you as a vile slave; and I advise you to burn his body and that of his mother in an open place, and bury them fifty feet below the ground, so that no grass shall grow upon them. It would poison your cattle.

There is something *sans-culottish* about this. This lawgiver has the soul of a Robespierre. Again we note the date of the edition of the Frisian Laws, 1782.

We now come to the passages which are wholly ridiculous, if taken in the serious, historical way affected by Dr. Ottema and his Frisian friends, and which might have shown them, without a moment's hesitation, that, whatever the MS. was, it was a relation not of fact, but of fiction. We are told that Minno, obviously Minos, was a Frisian king, born at

Lindawrda in Friesland, and that he wandered about the world till he came to Kreta, where he gave laws to the inhabitants. An extract from his institutions has a good deal of the antique Teuton flavour about it:

The toad blows himself out, but he can only crawl. The frog cries "Work, work," but he can do nothing but hop and make himself ridiculous. The raven cries "Spare, spare" (Spår, spår), but he steals and wastes everything that he gets into his beak.

Minos settled a Frisian colony in Kreta, and, returning home, left a virgin ruler to govern the island in his stead. Her suggestive title was Nyhellenia; but her real name, we are told, was Min-Erva. There is here some obscurity in the narrative; but, if we understand aright the meaning of the author, this lady Min-Erva, in her turn, sailed from Kreta and settled in Krekalanda. A Dutch note to the Frisian text kindly explains that "Krekaland means Magna Grecia, as well as Greece." We feel a curiosity to know who supplied this note, and from what authority. Min-Erva teaches the Krekalanders to worship one God; to be wise, and self-restrained, and tolerant.

At this point there comes a break, and the story is told, in somewhat different fashion, in the form of an extract of some autobiography of Minos. It is primarily interesting because he says that he started from "Athenia" on his way to Kreta, and thus supplies us with another familiar name. The historical style of the author is very molluscous, and we find it difficult to state precisely what he intends us to learn. This passage, however, is plainly enough intended to add an original testimony to the fact of the disappearance of that mysterious continent of Atlantis whither the ancients timidly set sail to gather precious dragon's blood, and of which it has been supposed that the Azores and the Canaries, Madeira and the Cape Verdes, are the loftiest summits, too high to be submerged:—

How the bad time came. During the whole summer the sun had been hid behind the clouds, as if unwilling to look upon the earth. There was perpetual calm, and the damp mist hung like a wet sail over the houses and the marshes. The air was heavy and oppressive, and in men's hearts was neither joy nor cheerfulness. In the midst of this stillness the earth began to tremble as if she were dying. The mountains opened to vomit forth fire and flames. Some sank into the bosom of the earth, and in other places mountains rose out of the plain. Aldland, called by the seafaring people Atlad, disappeared, and the wild waves rose so high over hill and dale that everything was buried in the sea. Many people were swallowed up by the earth, and others who had escaped the fire perished in the water. It was not only in Finda's land that the earth vomited fire, but also in Twiskland. Whole forests were burned one after another, and when the wind blew from that quarter our land was covered with ashes. Rivers changed their course, and at their mouths new islands were formed of sand and drift.

Twiskland is Germany. We seem, in the early part of this description, to be listening to a man whose imagination was full of the horrors of the earthquake at Lisbon. One hundred and one years after the event just recorded, we are told,

a people came up out of the East, driven onward by another people. They called themselves Magjars, and their king was named Magy. We now find ourselves brought down to the age of Adela herself, who began her narration thirty years after the murder of the Volksmoeder by the commander of the Magjars. We can therefore supply some outlines of chronology; for since Hiddo Oera Linda made the present copy of the MS. in "the three thousand four hundred and forty-ninth year after Atland was submerged"—that is, in A.D. 1256—the date of the disappearance of Atlantis may be placed at B.C. 2193, the incursion of the Magjars at B.C. 2092, and the event narrated so suddenly at the opening of the book in B.C. 2062. In the year B.C. 1982, then, to continue the Oera Linda chronology, Wodin, a Danish viking, invited by the Frisians, went out to fight the Magjars, and, after repulsing them for some time, was captured by them and—made their king. We are next introduced to two Frisian brothers, Nef Tunis and Inka, who start for the southern seas to win their fortunes; they proceed together in amity as far as a town in Spain, called Kadik, where there is a stone quay. It is very instructive to note that nearly two thousand years before the Christian era, Cadiz existed and flourished. Here they fell to a disagreement, and it was determined that one brother should go west, the other east. Inka, accordingly, set out to try whether there might not be, far beyond the Hesperides, some remnant of the vanished Atlantis. The *Oera Linda Book* says that he was never heard of again, but we are inclined to think that we have met with him in the history of Peru. Nef Tunis went eastward up the Mediterranean, and after divers troubles arrived, in the year B.C. 2000, at "an island with two deep bays so that there appeared to be three islands. In the middle one they established themselves, and afterwards built a city wall round the place. Then they wanted to give it a name, but disagreed about it. Some wanted to call it Fryasburch, others Nef Tunia (!); but the Magjars and Finns begged that it might be called Thyrhisburch." The Dutch annotator has again been afraid that we should not recognise this name, and has added "Tyrus."

With the inhabitants of the coast, and as far as the town of Sydon, they traded, exchanging amber and iron for wine, honey, and various products of the land. It is a pity that they did not elect the name Neftunia; it would have formed an elegant pendant to Min-Erva! We meet with other familiar names as we proceed—Athens, Ulysus, Troja, and so on; but we find nothing very important or interesting till near the end of the first part, the Book of Adela. This, as being in our opinion the most vigorous episode in the work, we give in summary.

One stormy winter night the watchman on the citadel of Texland heard, above the roar of the tempest and the sea, a noise of ruin in the watch-tower. In another moment he saw the sacred immortal light fall from its high station on to the bastion, and by its glare he saw thousands of men battering the gates and scaling the walls. Without a moment's warning war had fallen upon the Frisian people. It was the old foe,

Magy, come with a fleet of light vessels to steal the sacred lamp. The watchman gave the alarm, but it was too late; the multitudes rushed into the city, and one brutal Finn pierced to the chamber of the Mother herself. He ran a sword through her before a guardsman of her own could cleave his skull. Her still living body was borne on board the ship of Magy. When she was in measure restored, the insolent conqueror offered her humiliating terms for her life, and attempted to make use of her prophet's power. The dying maiden made as if she heard him not; but at last she took up her speech against him, and cried: "Before seven days have passed, your soul shall haunt the tombs with the night-birds, and your body shall be at the bottom of the sea." She fell fainting on the deck, and her captive maidens clustered around her; but the raging conqueror thrust them all aside, and bade his soldiers throw her still breathing body into the deep. This episode is invented with extraordinary force and skill, and is well worthy of attention. In the figure of the Maiden, Mother of her People, the author whom Dr. Ottema and his friends traduce by supposing him capable of a monstrous chronicle, has not thought of history, but typifies from the point of view of a romance-writer the fervour of liberty, the passion of Frisian freedom and unity, which has always characterized this remarkable little nation. Judged as a romance, the *Oera Linda Book* is a fairly interesting and novel Utopia; judged as a veracious piece of ancient history, it only casts ridicule on the critical faculty of those who have discussed it.

With the event last described, the Book of Adela closes; but not so the manuscript. A certain Adelbrost immediately takes up the thread, and states himself to be the son of Adela. But before he has written more than a page and a half, he comes to a horrid end. Two and thirty days after his mother's death, Adelbrost was found murdered on the wharf, his skull fractured, and his limbs torn asunder. It is his brother Apollonia, who continues the narrative, to whom we owe these harrowing particulars. After dwelling on them, he gives us an account of his mother Adela's death, who was also murdered by the Magjars. Friesland would seem to have fallen on very troublous times about the year B.C. 2000. We learn that Adela, like Queen Guenevere, was seven feet high, and that her wisdom exceeded her stature. There were giants on the earth in those days.

On the occasion of the death of Adela, there was inscribed on the outside wall of the city tower a long statement of religious opinion, which was to serve as doctrine to the inhabitants. This is a sort of impersonal deistic creed, dealing more largely in morality than faith, and apparently the result of a well-digested course of the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau. We learn therefrom that the causes of sin are dulness, carelessness, and ignorance; that the principles of Calvinism and elective grace are base and false; and that the existence of man ought to be a constant advance towards that absolute perfection which is *Wr-alda*, or the One God; but that the human spirit is not the Spirit of God, but a shadow of it.

There is also happily defined the familiar reflection that without the powers of the senses we should have had no proper thoughts at all. "If Wr-alda had given us no organs, we should have known nothing, and been more irrational than a piece of seaweed driven up and down by the ebb and flood."

It can serve no critical purpose to follow the disjointed narrative any further. One narrator after another takes it up, recording the deeds of successive generations; but there is no alteration of style, and the characteristics of the history remain unaltered. An attempt to give an account, from the Frisian point of view, of the rise of the Christian religion, is grotesquely ingenious, and would hardly have disgraced a speculative encyclopædist. In the heart of Cashmere the daughter of a king brought forth a child, whose father was a high priest. To save herself from destruction she had to entrust her babe to a poor couple, who brought him westward till he fell into the hands of a Frisian sailor, who taught him to value the wisdom of Texland, and become, in short, a good *fria Friesa*. There follows a piece of brilliant comparative mythology, the force of which is less apparent in the English version, because Mr. Sandbach, in a fit of inexplicable prudery, has outraged the Frisian text by disguising the first name as Jessos:—

His first name was Jes-us; but the priests, who hated him, called him Fo, that is, false; the people called him Kris-en (Krishna), that is, shepherd; and his Frisian friend called him Bâda (Buddha), purse, because he had in his head a treasure of wisdom, and in his heart a treasure of love.

This fourfold deity combines in himself all the virtues of the Orient, and the benefits of four great philosophic systems. Shortly after his death we find kingly tyranny and priestly aggression, the two great bugbears of the author of the *Oera Linda Book*, rapidly undoing all the lovely work of the man-god's blameless life, and the rhetoric rises to passionate eloquence as the corruption and enthrallment of the world are bewailed.

Soon after this lyric outburst the narrative incontinently closes in the middle of a sentence, and the weary reader hardly wishes it completed. The monotony of the style has been excessive, and the invention has seldom had the power of riveting the student's attention or persuading his conviction.

In summing up, we must regard this much-discussed MS. chronicle of primæval history as a romance of the end of the last century, written in all probability by a radical and free-thinker whose mind was steeped with the sceptical ideas of the eighteenth century, but still more with the intense and passionate patriotism which has never ceased to characterize the Frisian people. He was evidently a man of learning and talent, but of no genius; for a man of genius would have arranged his narrative with more art, would have given it shape and proportion, and would have set here and there some jewel of suggestion or insight which would have

constrained our belief, though only for a moment. These gifts one cannot recognise in the writer of the *Oera Linda MS.* His book is replete with feeling, elevation, and sentiment: it is, above all, what the Germans call a *Tendenz-Buch*; it strives to teach an earnest moral lesson in the form of a romance. All this is characteristic of the period to which we are inclined to assign its authorship. We would go further, and dare to conjecture that its composition dates from the earliest years of reaction, when the ideas of the *Encyclopædia* had fully blossomed in the French Revolution, and had borne such bitter fruit that men began, still clinging fast to Rousseau, to give up all other free-thinking supports, and return to a modified deism and a modified conservatism. The tide once turned, the flood rushed back with violence; in a few years Joseph de Maistre and Chateaubriand were the leaders of opinion. The *Oera Linda Book* seems to us to mark the instant of reaction, and to stand midway between Diderot and the Seraphic Epos. But while giving the author credit, not only for most pure and exalted desires, but for very considerable talent and ingenuity in putting them forth, we are at a loss how to characterize the critics who have palmed this romance upon the world as a genuine primeval history. They are seriously to be blamed for having wasted their time in attempting to persuade European scholarship of the truth of such a frivolity—time that might better have been spent in discovering the exact date of composition of the MS., and the name and purpose of its author. It is to be hoped that they will at length be persuaded to give their attention to this investigation. To find out who wrote the *Oera Linda Book*, and what its subsequent history has been, cannot, to say the least, be more difficult than to discover what song the Sirens sang to Ulysses; and this we know, on the authority of Sir Thomas Brown, is a legitimate subject for scientific inquiry.

Since the above lines were written there has appeared in the *Academy** a letter from M. Jules Andrieu, which we should do very wrong to fail to notice. It is, as far as we know, the only piece of true criticism which has hitherto been brought to bear on the *Oera Linda Book*. We recommend those of our readers who feel disposed to pursue the subject further to read this learned and scholarly communication, the more so as M. Andrieu's opinion does not wholly coincide with our own. It is needless to say that he rejects without discussion the assumption of the great antiquity of the MS., but he is inclined to place the date of composition at the end of the seventeenth and not of the eighteenth century. He cites a variety of passages showing beyond a doubt that the author borrowed largely from Olof Rudbeck, whose celebrated work, in folio, appeared in 1679 and in 1689. These plagiarisms from Rudbeck are supplemented by some, equally obvious, from Lipsius; and we do not suppose that it will occur to any one, even in Friesland, to attack

* June 17, 1876.

the position that the *Oera Linda Book* was subsequent to the works of these writers. We contend, however, that the spirit of the French writers of the eighteenth century is quite as present as the words of the authors named, only in a diffused form; and, pending fuller light on the subject, we continue to hold that the *Oera Linda Book* was written in the last years of the eighteenth century.

M. Andrieu further draws our attention to a curious parallel to the *Oera Linda Book* in a romance published in 1806 by a Flemish Councillor, the object of which was to prove that the Elysian as well as the Infernal Regions of the ancients were situated in the islands of the Lower Rhine, and that Ulysses left his own name in that of the town of Flushing. This writer makes great use of the works of Rudbeck, and, like our MS., talks of Min-Erva. Here, we think, is more than a clue to the discovery of the authorship of the *Oera Linda Book*.

The Child-Violinist.

HE had played for his lordship's levee,
He had played for her ladyship's whim,
Till the poor little head was heavy,
And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peaked and eerie,
And the large eyes strange and bright,
And they said—too late—"He is weary!
He shall rest for, at least, To-night!"

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,
As they watched in the silent room,
With the sound of a strained cord breaking,
A something snapped in the gloom.

'Twas a string of his violoncello,
And they heard him stir in his bed:—
"Make room for a tired little fellow,
Kind God!—" was the last that he said.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

Yun-nan.

To Englishmen accustomed to the rain and mists of their native land, a region the climate of which has earned for it the name of "South of the Clouds" (Yun-nan) presents an attractive picture, in imagination. But, to a great extent, the vision thus conjured up of perpetual blue skies, and soft breezes, disappears on actual acquaintanceship, and if Yun-nan depended solely on its climate to attract the attention of Englishmen it would remain for ever in well-deserved obscurity. But many circumstances have combined to invest it, especially at the present time, with more than usual interest. It forms the highway connecting the outer world with Western China from whichever direction that much-desired region may be approached, whether by ourselves from Burmah on the west, or by the Russians from Mongolia on the north, or by the French from Cochin-China on the south-east; it is rich to a degree in minerals; it is partly inhabited by strange and diverse tribes; it has lately been the scene of a religious and political movement which at one time threatened the existence of the empire, and which was, three years ago, suppressed with a cruelty fortunately unknown in Europe; still more recently it witnessed the murder of Mr. Margary under circumstances of great treachery; and, within the last few days, Mr. Grosvenor's mission, which was despatched to watch the course of proceedings taken on the spot against the perpetrators of that murder and the instigators of the crime, have completed their labours.

Since the days of Marco Polo until now, twice only, as far as is known, have European travellers, apart from resident Roman Catholic missionaries, succeeded in passing through Yun-nan. The first of these were M. Garnier and his party, who, in 1868, with rare daring and perseverance, followed up the course of the Mekong into this *terra incognita*, and, after having travelled northwards as far as Ta-li-foo, left the province to the eastward by the Yang-tsze-keang, and so reached Shanghai; and to Mr. Margary belonged the distinction of having been the second to traverse the province, and the first to cross it from east to west when on his way last year to meet Colonel Browne's expedition at Bhamo, in Burmah. Numerous other attempts have been made to perform the same exploit, but they have one and all failed. From the side of Burmah Major Sladen in 1868, and Colonel Browne in 1874, essayed to enter into the promised land, but they got no further than its threshold; Mr. Cooper attacked it on the north, and after numerous perils failed to penetrate further than Wei-se-heen, where he was imprisoned, and from which town he barely

escaped with his life; by way of the Yang-tsze-keang Captain Blakiston attempted it in 1861, but beyond Ping-shan-heen in Sze-chuen he found it impossible to venture; and in 1872 Baron von Richthofen was compelled to give up the cherished idea of exploring its roads owing to the following unforeseen and curious accident. When crossing a mountain pass which near Tsing-keheen separates Sze-chuen from Yun-nan, the Baron's party met a number of coolies carrying a coffin containing the body of the wife of Li Hsieh-tai to its last home in the native province of the deceased. Without rhyme or reason the coffin-bearers, numbering about forty-seven men, attacked the Baron's servants, and pillaged the baggage animals, taking forcible possession of horses, guns, and baggage. After a vexatious delay these were recovered; but, as an excuse for their conduct, the coolies deposed before the Taou-tai that the Baron's servants had at the outset broken off a piece of the coffin of their late mistress. Knowing full well that this assertion would reach the ears of Li Hsieh-tai (the same officer who was charged with having instigated the murder of Mr. Margary), and being aware of the superstitious reverence shown by the Chinese for the dead and for all that pertains to them, the Baron determined not to risk an invasion into the districts commanded by that truculent hero, so turned his back on the object of his journey.

Any accurate survey of the province has thus been impossible, and its main features are all that are known to us. Situated in the extreme south-west of China, Yun-nan borders on Burmah on the west, on Siam and Cochin-China on the south, on the provinces of Kwang-se and Kweichow on the east, and on that of Sze-chuen on the north, and contains an area of 107,969 square miles. The central portion of the province appears to consist of a high plateau, from which diverge a number of valley plains. In these plains, which are separated by mountain ridges, are situated the principal cities of the province, and in some of them also lie embosomed large and picturesquely-formed lakes. The inequalities of the ground are further aggravated by the action of the rivers which have washed away the upper strata of easily-destructible rocks, and have made their beds on more solid foundations from hundreds to thousands of feet deep. All this, from a tourist's point of view, adds much to the beauty of the district, but it throws difficulties in the path of the wayfarer bent on crossing these plains and ridges which are by no means slight. Mr. Margary was such a one, and thus describes in his diary the obstacles he had to fight against in a day's journey in the neighbourhood of Loo-fung-heen:—"It [the day's stage] is full of steep passes, the chief of which rises to 3,500 feet (by my aneroid), and the track by which it is surmounted is simply a chaos of deep ruts and broken stones, offering the acme of dangerous footing to animals as well as carriers. Chair-bearers have to be supplemented by six or eight coolies dragging a rope passed round the chair, and even with this aid it is difficult to conceive how they retain their footing at the rate they press up the incline. Often it appears to be only a feat of balancing skill which saves a dangerous fall,

and many are the knocks sustained by the traveller from the collisions between his chair and the projecting stones. In many places the steep path has a horizontal slope as well, and, to complicate the danger, pack animals passing both ways have to be avoided." Such is the nature of the road between Yun-nan-foo and the head of the Tai-ping valley leading to Bhamo, in Burmah. Much of the scenery, however, is beautiful; the hills are in many places densely covered with wood, and the undergrowth is luxuriant. So far as regards nature; but man has done his best to mar the beauty of the prospect. The ravages of war have left their marks in the blackened remains of villages which once were peaceful homes of industry and comfort, and in the well-nigh deserted cities, which can now scarcely be said to be encircled by their ruined and prostrate walls. Still further north the ridges separating the valley plains become higher and higher until they rise into the snowy mountains which overshadow the north-western corner of the province. The passes over these are extremely difficult and dangerous, and in many places the only means of crossing the rivers when they flow between high and perpendicular cliffs is in a sling of leathern thongs made fast to a sort of skid of hard wood fitted on to a bamboo rope which is suspended between two wooden stages, one on each bank. The traveller starts from one at a considerable elevation above that on the bank to which he would go, and is shot down the incline. Another rope arranged in the opposite way brings him back. The scenery in this part of the province is very magnificent. The mountains are clothed with forests of every variety of hue, and the valleys, which are extremely fertile, are full of verdure of almost tropical growth. As a background to this picture, and one worthy of it, the lofty peaks of the snowy mountains stand like gigantic sentries barring the way between North-western Yun-nan and the land of the Dalai Lama. Quite in keeping with the physical features of the country are its natural inhabitants. Deer abound in the mountains; while in this and other parts of the province "wild animals, such as lions, bears, wolves, stags, bucks, and roes," as Marco Polo has it, "exist in great numbers; and there are also vast quantities of fowl of every kind." Crocodiles also are found in certain districts, and when found are eagerly sought after by the natives, who devour their flesh with avidity, and of their galls make a most precious medicine, which they believe to be a certain cure for the bites of mad dogs, and to be an effectual remedy in all cases of skin diseases. Their manner of catching these monsters, as related by the great Venetian traveller, has at least the merit of novelty. "You must know," he says, "that by day they [the crocodiles] live underground because of the great heat, and in the night they go out to feed, and devour every animal they can catch. They go also to drink at the rivers and lakes and springs, and their weight is so great that when they travel in search of food or drink, as they do by night, the tail makes a great furrow in the soil as if a full tun of liquor had been dragged along. Now the huntsmen who go after them take them by a certain gyn which they set in the track over which

the serpent has passed, knowing that the beast will come back the same way. They plant a stake deep in the ground, and fix on the head of this a sharp blade of steel made like a razor or a lance-point, and then they cover the whole with sand so that the serpent cannot see it. . . . On coming to the spot the beast strikes against the iron blade with such force that it enters his breast, and rives him up to the navel, so that he dies on the spot." To sportsmen possessed of admiring eyes for the beauties of nature and of a taste for mountaineering, Yun-nan might thus offer very considerable attractions. It has the advantage also of having for one approach a water highway, the Yang-tsze-keang, the grandeur of the scenery of which is not to be surpassed on any river in the world; and possibly the time may come when, the playgrounds of Europe having been exhausted, tourists, at the bidding of a book of the future which might be entitled "Try Yun-nan," will troop through its stupendous gorges, and over the wild rapids of the Upper Yang-tsze, into this region, where now the fierce passions which have been let loose by war bar the road to all unprovided with the weapons of office.

But the attractions to be met with aboveground are as nothing compared to those which exist beneath the surface of the soil. Gold, silver, copper, lead, spelter, coal, tin, iron, and salt lie hidden in extraordinary profusion beneath the feet of the traveller in Yun-nan. Through the northern part of the province run the upper waters of the Yang-tsze-keang, which there bears the tempting name of the "River of Golden Sands." Nor is this an empty title. Gold is found in considerable quantities in its bed, and great numbers of people are engaged in "washing" the precious metal, which is as eagerly sought after in this corner of the earth as it is in the London Stock Exchange. Among the hills also in the neighbourhood of this and of the Lan-tsang-keang—the name by which the Mekong is known in Yun-nan—are numerous gold-mines. Speaking of what he saw in this district, Mr. T. T. Cooper says:—"A number of people were hard at work: some bringing the auriferous earth from horizontal shafts in the side of the hills; others washing it in long troughs made of hollowed trees into which a constant supply of water flowed from a little stream. The gold-mines, the chief informed me, were very rich; indeed the country lying between Atensee and Weisee may be called the gold-field of China. . . . I was shown some scaly gold, of a rich deep colour; and the chief gave me a handful as a sample, to show to the merchants of my country, saying that he would be glad to trade with them." But, plentiful as it now is, it is probably not so abundant as it was formerly; and this would naturally be the case since a considerable quantity is obtained from the beds of rivers. Marco Polo tells us that in his day the exchange in Eastern Yun-nan was eight of silver for one of gold, and in the western portion of the province six of silver for one of gold; whereas, when Major Sladen visited Tang-yueh-chow in 1868, the price of pure gold was thirteen times its weight in silver, and M. Garnier mentions that the exchange

at Ta-li-foo in 1869 was twelve to one. In Marco Polo's time also gold was so plentiful that the men of one of the bordering tribes used to cover their teeth "with a sort of golden case made to fit them, both the upper and the under;" but, with the rise in exchange, this custom has disappeared, and no trace of the "Gold-Teeth" is now to be found. "The abundance of gold in Yun-nan is proverbial in China," says Martini, "so that if a man lives very extravagantly, they ask if his father is governor of Yun-nan." This saying points to one of the great evils of the Chinese system of government. The official salaries of the mandarins are so absurdly small that they must needs supplement them in one way or another, and the consequence is that they levy black-mail on all taxable property within their jurisdictions. It so happens that in Yun-nan the richest gold-mines are beyond their reach, being situated within the territories of virtually independent chieftains; but this is not the case with the principal silver-mines, and the result is that on these the official hand clothed with no silken glove rests heavily. From the information gathered by Baron von Richthofen it appears that by local custom the proceeds of the mines are divided into three portions: one of which is paid to the Crown, one to "the mandarins," and the residue remains or should remain with the owner. But at each mine soldiers are stationed to watch the extraction; and, compared with the robberies committed by these custodians, the pilfering of workmen, the attacks of banditti on the mines, and the onslaught of highwaymen on the specie convoys when on their way to the nearest mart, are as trifles. Owing to the grasping greed of these military guards, the production of silver in the province is now almost stopped; and it was out of a scuffle at a silver-mine between the soldiers and the Mahomedan workmen that the Panthay rebellion sprang, of which more anon. Beyond the authority of the mandarins silver is freely worked, and some of the hill tribes bear evidence to the existence of mines in their territories by a display of weighty bracelets and bands of silver on their arms and legs.

A somewhat similar system, and one as open to abuse, regulates the production of copper from the mines. Before an owner can open a mine he is compelled to obtain a licence, under the conditions of which he engages to sell all the copper he extracts, to certain holders of a Government concession, at the fixed rate of eight taels (*3*l.* 8*s.**) per picul (133 lbs.). These middlemen, on their part, are obliged to pay into the provincial treasury two taels per picul, and having done this they are allowed to dispose of the copper as they choose. The *concessionnaires* form an association and consist principally of merchants; but, as the business is too lucrative to be allowed to escape altogether from the clutches of the mandarins, they are usually presided over by some of the higher provincial officials, by virtue of whose presence among them they have at their command a small military force. At Seu-chow-foo, on the Yang-tze-keang, the copper thus produced fetches twenty taels per picul, or exactly double its cost at the mine's mouth after all duties have

been paid, and the [profits, therefore, even after the expenses of transit have been taken into account, must be considerable. For some years the copper-mines have been almost as little worked as the silver-mines, owing to the disturbed state of the province; but, now that peace has been again restored, it may confidently be expected that owners who can sell copper at \$160 (about 36*l.*) a ton will find abundant inducement to dig for the hidden treasure, even though they may have to put up with workmen who pilfer and guards who steal.

The step from precious metals to salt may seem at first sight a long one, but in parts of Yun-nan salt-cakes are as much current coins as are copper cash in the rest of the empire. Marco Polo tells us that in his day "their [the natives'] small change again was made up in this way. They have salt which they boil and set in a mould (flat below and round above), and every piece from the mould weighs about half a pound. Now, eighty moulds of this salt are worth one *saggio* of fine gold, which is a weight so called. So this salt serves them for small change." This statement, though vaguely put, is as accurately true now as it was then, with the exception that the moulds of the present day weigh 133 lbs. instead of half a pound. The salt, in the first place, is drawn from brine wells, and condensed in pans of the shape described by Marco Polo. Each cake is stamped with the Government seal, and then either finds its way to the consumer, or for a time passes into circulation among the hill tribes and the Chinese in their neighbourhood. Most of the wells are in the southern portion of the province, and it is only quite lately that silver has begun to take the place of salt in mercantile transactions in cities situated in the neighbourhood of Poo-urh-foo and Seu-maou. The hill tribes attach great value to salt, and the chief aim of their constant raids upon Chinese villages is to steal it. The Chinese in their turn use it as an instrument with which to plunder the hill tribes, who willingly exchange the commodities at their command, such as gold, musk, and skins, at ruinous rates, for the coveted necessary. It is almost needless to say that, being thus valuable, salt does not escape the notice of the mandarins, apart from the imperial tax upon it; but, as it is comparatively cheap, the official difficulties it has to struggle against in its production are not so great as those which surround the various processes connected with gold, silver, and copper.

Coal is very generally distributed throughout the province, and the same may be said of iron, tin, and lead. In variety and extent of mineral wealth Yun-nan is the richest province of China; but it pays the invariable penalty attached to regions possessing great mineral riches, and in agricultural products is comparatively poor. In the south of the province there is a kind of tea produced known as Poo-urh tea, from the district in which it is grown, which has a very considerable reputation. The Chinese say that it "is more refreshing than any other kind, and, although strong, does not irritate the nerves as other green teas do; also, that, if prepared in the Chinese way, it will bear seven infusions without

showing any signs of being reduced in strength and delicious flavour." But probably the most generally profitable crop grown in the province is opium. It is not by any means of the best quality; but it is highly appreciated on the spot, and is exported in large quantities both to Sze-chuen and Kwei-chow, to the drug grown in both of which provinces it is vastly superior. But in no region, however intrinsically rich it may be, can the people be otherwise than poor if it has no ready means of communication with the outer world; and in this respect Yun-nan is unfortunately. No river highways lead up to its mines, nor to its fields of grain and poppy. The configuration of the province forbids such a condition of things. It is true that the Yang-tze-keang, or, as it is there called, the Kin-sha-keang, crosses its northern frontier, and that the Lan-tsang-keang, or Mekong, traverses its western part from north to south; but neither are navigable within its limits. Long land trade-routes are therefore the order of the day at Yun-nan. Of these there are three principal ones, all of which diverge from the capital, Yun-nan-foo, as their centre. The first is the road travelled by Mr. Margary to Bhamo, *vid* Ta-li-foo, Tang-yü-chow (Momiën), and Manwyne. This route occupies about twenty-eight days, and is in places surrounded with great difficulties owing to the high mountain ranges and deep river beds which it crosses. The next in importance is that leading to Seu-chow-foo, on the Yang-tze-keang, in Sze-chuen; and this may be traversed in about twenty-four days. It presents no such difficulties as does the road to Bhamo, as may be evidenced by the fact that freight between the two termini is charged at the rate of five taels and four mace (or about 17. 16s. 8d.) per picul of about 150 lbs. And the third connects Yun-nan-foo with the head waters of the Canton west river at Pih-se-foo. Owing to the disturbed state of the province, this route has for some years been entirely disused; but formerly merchants carried their wares from one point to the other in twenty days, and from Pih-se-foo boats bore them to Canton in a like time. One other newly-discovered route remains to be mentioned. A report has long been current that Yun-nan is directly connected with the sea by a navigable river; but it was reserved for M. Dupuy to prove that this was no idle rumour. This enterprising traveller discovered, in 1871, that Man-haou, a trading mart in the south-east of the province, was connected with the Songka river by a navigable tributary, and that thus there existed a water route from that place to the Gulf of Tonquin. The advantage of this route is the shortness of the land journey which it entails. Man-haou is reached from Yun-nan-foo in twelve days, *vid* Mung-tsze-heen, an important trading centre on the south-eastern edge of the central plateau, from which place a two days' journey, including a long and steep descent, leads to Man-haou. Hitherto, however, the action of the Cochin-Chinese authorities has been such as to render this route impossible; but, if their opposition could be overcome, this would under present circumstances be by far the easiest and cheapest line of communication between Yun-nan and the rest of the world.

The western frontier of Yun-nan has never been very clearly laid down. The hill ranges which separate it from Burmah, and the unruly inhabitants which dwell among them, are not possessions of sufficient value to make either the potentate at Peking or his ally at Mandalay anxious to claim them; besides, the Chinese power has never been so firmly established in the province as to make the exploration of the mountains which skirt its frontier advisable. And the result has been that the hill tribes have been left in undisturbed possession of their mountain fastnesses. In some parts the only intimations their Chinese neighbours have of their existence are when they swoop down to carry off the salt or other coveted property of the Celestials; but, in others, Chinese civilisation has drawn those most accessible to it within its influence, and these show a ready appreciation of its advantages. Thus in many of the border towns the mountaineers are nearly as numerous as the Chinese inhabitants, and their swarthy faces and bright-coloured garments are everywhere visible, in the market-place, in the shop, and at the domestic hearth. It is possible also that racial tendencies may have had something to do with the disposition of some tribes to nomadic lives, and of others for settled employment. For, though the mountains are continuous, the people who inhabit them are divided into numbers of tribes, differing in appearance, in ideas, and in manner of life. It is difficult to get much information about these mountaineers. Chinese writers are chary of dealing with them; and it is only therefore from travellers—and they have hitherto been few and far between—that it is possible to glean any particulars about them. Beginning in the mountains in the north of the province, in the neighbourhood of the Lan-tsang-keang, there is the quasi-Tibetan tribe, called by the Chinese Mossos. The people of this tribe have mixed a great deal with the Chinese. They live in Chinese-looking houses, and, although they have a language of their own, Chinese alone is taught in their schools. The men dress like Chinamen and wear pigtails, and it is only in the garments worn by the women that distinguishing features are to be found. The Mosso women despise the staid attire of their Chinese neighbours, and still adhere to their tribal costume. This consists of "a very becoming little cap of red and black cloth with pendant tassel, jauntily worn on the top of the head, inclining a little to one side; a short loose jacket with long wide sleeves, over a tight-fitting cotton bodice covering the breasts; with a kilt-like petticoat of home-made cotton stuff, reaching from the waist to the knee, and gathered in longitudinal plaits. Instead of stockings, their finely-shaped limbs are swathed from the ankle to the knee with white or blue cotton cloth; while leather shoes, turned up in a sharp point at the toe, complete the chaussure of the Mosso ladies, who, though not quite so fair as the Chinese, are generally well-proportioned and good-looking. As ornaments, they wear huge silver earrings (resembling in shape the handle of a common key), silver rings and bracelets, and bead necklaces."

Further westward, between the Lan-tsang-keang and the Lo-keang or Salwen, dwell the Lissus, who bear in outward appearance a resemblance to the Mossos, but who are of a more lawless disposition, and, believing themselves to have been wrongfully dispossessed of their rightful inheritance by the Celestials, they delight to take their revenge by falling on any stray Chinese traveller who may cross their path. Besides these, Lolos, Se-fans, Tibetans, Meaou-tsze, Pa-es, Ho-nhi, Khato, Lopé, Shen-tsen, and other tribes less known to fame, have their dwellings on the border-land of the province. Chance glimpses into their modes of life reveal the fact that some of the strangest customs known to mankind still exist among them. Marco Polo says that in his time the practice of the *Couvade* was common with them. And modern Chinese writers affirm that in the present day when a Meaou-tsze matron has given birth to a child, she gets up and attends to the cares of the household, whilst her husband goes to bed for a whole month with the infant in his arms. The same loose practices, also, with regard to young women, which were ascribed by Ælian to the Lydians, by Herodotus to the Gindanes of Lybia, and by Pallas to the Mongols and kindred races, still exist among some of them, notably the Se-fans. The young women of this tribe, far from considering intrigues as matters for shame, regard them rather as a credit and recommendation than otherwise; and, strange to say, their future husbands take the same view of the case.

Devil-dancing and all the mummery of divination is universal, and Chinese authors give strange accounts of the ceremonies performed at funerals, marriages, and on other great occasions.

Yun-nan first became a province of China during the reign of Kublai Khan. Before that time it had been an independent State, and had been known as Nan-chao, and afterwards, under the Sung dynasty, A.D. 1123, as Ta-li. Many attempts had been made by the Chinese to incorporate it in the empire, and during the Tang dynasty (618-907) an army of 80,000 men was sent to subdue it. But the inhabitants defeated it as they had defeated others, and barely 20,000 men returned to report the result of the expedition to him who despatched it. But in 1272 Ta-li met a more formidable foe. Kublai Khan, having carried his victorious arms over the greater part of the empire, marched a force into Ta-li to subdue that State also. This he accomplished; and from that time forward, with some few intervals, Yun-nan has formed an integral portion of China. The presence of Kublai Khan on the frontier so excited the wrath of the King of Burmah, Marco Polo tells us, that he sent a force against him of 20,000 great elephants, on each of which was set a tower of timber, well-framed and strong, and carrying from twelve to sixteen well-armed fighting men, in addition to 60,000 horse and foot. This formidable array gave battle to Kublai Khan near Yung-chang-foo (Momiên). At sight of the elephants the Mongol horses swerved and turned back, and the battle would have been lost had not Kublai Khan ordered his men to dismount and fight on foot with their bows and arrows.

These they used to such good purpose that "when the elephants felt the smart of those arrows that pelted them like rain, they turned tail and fled, and nothing on earth would have induced them to turn and face the Tartars. . . . So when the Tartars saw that the elephants had turned tail and would not be brought to face the fight again, they got to horse at once and charged the enemy. And then the battle began to rage furiously with sword and mace. Right fiercely did the two hosts meet together, and deadly were the blows exchanged. The king's troops were more in number than the Tartars, but they were not of such quality, nor so inured to war. . . . Then might you see swashing blows dealt and taken from sword and mace; then might you see knights and horses and men-at-arms go down; then might you see arms and hands and legs and heads hewn off; and, besides the dead that fell, many a wounded man, that never rose again from the corn-field, there was. The din and uproar was so great from this side and from that, that God might have thundered and no man would have heard it! Great was the medley, and dire and parlous was the fight that was fought on both sides; but the Tartars had the best of it." This battle decided the fate of Burmah, and from thenceforth the king became a vassal of China. On that occasion also, Kublai Khan captured two hundred elephants; and thus arose the practice, which still exists, of receiving elephants at the Chinese Court as tribute from Burmah. As lately as the end of last year, the arrival at Peking of the first batch of elephants from Burmah since the extinction of the Panthay rebellion, was reported.

Since its addition to the Chinese empire, Yun-nan has been the scene of repeated rebellions. Its distance from the capital and the mountainous nature of much of its surface, have made it a convenient resort of the disaffected and rebellious during troublous times, and at the falls and risings again of dynasties. When the founders of the present dynasty invaded the empire, it was to Yun-nan that the latest adherents of the Mings retreated, and since then almost every insurrectionary movement which has disturbed the empire has found an echo in Yun-nan.

Marco Polo tells us that, in his day, the population was made up of Saracens, Idolaters, and Nestorian Christians; and now, though no trace is to be found of the last-named sect, Saracens and Idolaters are well represented. A doubt hangs over the when and the from whence Mahomedans first found their way into Yun-nan. The usually accepted account is, that their ancestors, who formed part of a Central Asian army which was sent to China to assist the Emperor Sutsung against his enemies (757), were transported to Yun-nan as soon as they had served their purpose by bringing the campaign to a successful issue. But, however that may be, Yun-nan has for centuries been thickly peopled with followers of the Prophet. In common with their co-religionists in other provinces of China, they have been subjected from time to time to oppression by the Chinese, and for many years their relations with the mandarins have been anything but friendly. During the early part of

the century, Mahomedan rebellions were of frequent occurrence; and, though these risings were often formidable, none assumed the dimensions of the insurrection which has only lately been subdued.

It may well be imagined, that in a region possessing such stores of mineral wealth as Yun-nan, opportunities for oppressing a people who were both hated and despised would present themselves more frequently than in districts where disputes were less likely to occur, and the system of regulating the mines under official superintendence, as above described, would be a weapon always ready at hand for the mandarins to wield. Thus it happened that, in 1855, in consequence of some act of injustice perpetrated upon them, the Mahomedan workmen at the Loesocaphoo silver-mines rose against the soldiers on guard. The riot quickly spread through the neighbourhood, and the movement took the form of a religious war. The soldiers destroyed the mosques in the districts in their possession, and the Panthays retaliated by pulling down all the Buddhist temples they met with. Meanwhile, the Mahomedans made rapid headway against the provincial authorities, who were without a sufficient local force to offer a successful resistance, and who were unable to get help from Peking owing to the efforts which were being made by the Imperial Government at the time to suppress the Tai-ping rebellion. At first they carried on a guerilla warfare in the mountain fastnesses and woods; but, as their numbers increased, they descended to the valleys and made themselves masters of many of the towns and villages therein lying. Their first great triumph was the capture of Ta-li-foo, a place of great importance, and the ancient capital of the province. This they made their head-quarters, and one of the inhabitants, Ma by name, was elected to rule over them, under the title of Suleiman. With untiring energy Suleiman carried on the war, and, after capturing a hundred villages and thirty-seven towns, he made himself master of the modern capital, Yun-nan-foo. At this time the greater part of the province was in the hands of the Panthays, and it was asserted by them that the Imperial Government actually proposed to cede to them Yun-nan as a condition of peace. But this offer, if it were ever made, was rejected, and the war was carried on to the knife.

Meanwhile Suleiman established a system of government, and assumed on his own part all the insignia of supreme power. He issued ten ordinances for the instruction of his troops and his subjects, and appointed officers to rule over the several districts within his jurisdiction. The taxes he imposed on his people were extremely light, and every endeavour was made to foster such trade as the disturbed state of the country rendered possible. Caravans were carefully protected against plunder, and hostilities even were stopped on occasions to secure their safe transit through the lines. Professedly the Panthays were strict observers of the laws of the Prophet. As a rule, they abstained from strong drink, tobacco, and opium, and even with greater fervour they obeyed the precept which enjoins the practice of taking a plurality of wives.

Unfortunately, like all Mahomedans, the Panthays were fatalists, and, when they had reached the full tide of their prosperity, they began to turn willing ears to the voices of their prophets, who prophesied smooth things, and told them to rest and be thankful, for that some years must pass before their time of ultimate triumph would come. After ten or twelve years of incessant and successful warfare, this advice was welcome to them, and they gladly changed their tactics from the offensive to the defensive. Meanwhile the Tai-ping rebellion, through the instrumentality of Colonel Gordon and his "ever-victorious army," had been suppressed, and the Imperial Government had leisure to turn its attention to Yun-nan. Troops began to pour into the province, and before long the provincial capital Yun-nan-foo again fell into the hands of the mandarins. Still the Panthays remained inactive; and no great efforts were made by the Imperialists, until the despatch of a Panthay embassy to England to ask for recognition roused their fears and alarmed their susceptibilities. Then in good earnest they began the campaign, and in the beginning of 1873 an army of 200,000 men besieged Ta-li-foo. The treachery, as it is said, of a Panthay officer enabled the Chinese army to gain possession of the outer fortifications, and, as further resistance had thus become impossible, Suleiman agreed to surrender the city on condition that his life should be spared. This was agreed to, and, having poisoned his wives and children, Suleiman entered his palanquin, and ordered his bearers to carry him to the Chinese general. Probably the manner in which he met his death will never be known; but report says, that, when the palanquin arrived at the imperial camp, the dead body of the Mahomedan chieftain was found in it. All his attendants who came out with him, together with the members of an embassy who tried to treat for surrender, were beheaded, and the Chinese troops marched into the city. Then began a frightful scene of carnage. Every Mahomedan man, woman, and child were ruthlessly massacred, and there is reason to believe that between 40,000 and 50,000 people fell victims on that day. Flushed with victory, the Imperial army marched on to Momien and took it by storm on the 25th of May of the same year. Here were repeated all the atrocities which had been perpetrated at Ta-li-foo, and with the fall of Momien the Panthay rebellion ceased to exist.

With the restoration of peace the project of opening a trade route from British Burmah to Yun-nan, which had been attempted by Major Sladen in 1868, was revived, and in January, 1875, an expedition, under the command of Colonel Browne, left Mandalay for the Yun-nan frontier. To avoid all difficulties which might arise after the arrival of the mission on Chinese soil, it was arranged that a consular officer should be sent overland from Shanghai to meet the party entering from Burmah. For this difficult undertaking the choice of the British Minister at Peking fell upon Mr. Margary—a young officer who had distinguished himself in the service for his sound sense, his sterling abilities, and his high courage. With a light heart he left Shanghai on the 4th of September, 1874, and

on the 17th of the following January he arrived at Bhamo, in Burmah, after having accomplished a journey through the breadth of China, which had never before been performed by any Englishman, and in the course of which the usual difficulties of travel in the East had been greatly aggravated by the attack of a severe and protracted illness. At Bhamo he met Colonel Browne's party, and in company with them he turned back towards the Chinese frontier. But they had not gone far when reports reached Colonel Browne that several hundred evil-disposed Kakh-yens and Chinese robbers had banded themselves together at Manwyne, a town inside the Chinese frontier, to attack him. As the authority on which these reports were based appeared to be doubtful, Colonel Browne sent Mr. Margary forward to Manwyne to ascertain the real state of affairs. On the day following his departure, a letter was received from him, written from a village on the way to Manwyne, "announcing that all was quiet, and that the people had been civil." On receipt of this communication, Colonel Browne resumed his march; but the next day rumours of an impending attack were again afloat, and the attitude of the people became so threatening that the Colonel halted and employed the Burmese guard in throwing up earthworks in front of his position. Nor were the rumours unfounded; for on the following day a large Chinese force gave battle to the Colonel's party, who, if it had not been for the assistance given by two friendly Kakh-yen chiefs, would probably have fared badly. As it was, they beat off their assailants and succeeded in making good their retreat to Bhamo, but without poor Margary, the news of whose murder at Manwyne reached Colonel Browne on the morning of the attack on his expedition.

Two stories are current as to the manner in which Margary met his death: one is, that he was cut down in the streets as he was preparing to start for a ride into the neighbourhood of the town; another is, that he was deliberately murdered at a dinner to which he was treacherously invited by a local mandarin. As Mr. Grosvenor's report on the result of his investigation into the circumstances of the case will soon be made public, it is needless now to inquire which is the more likely story of the two. Speaking of the people of Yun-nan in his day, Marco Polo says:—"If it chance that a man of fine person or noble birth, or some other quality that recommended him, came to lodge with those people, then they would murder him by poison or otherwise. And this they did, not for the sake of plunder, but because they believed that in this way the goodly favour and wisdom and repute of the murdered man would cleave to the house where he was slain." If there should be any dwellers in Yun-nan who still hold to this ancient belief, with what envy must they look on the murderer of Mr. Margary, who by a single blow won for himself an inheritance of so much "goodly favour, wisdom, and repute!"

R. K. D.

Hours in a Library.

No. XIII.—WORDSWORTH'S ETHICS.

UNDER every poetry; it has been said, there lies a philosophy. Rather, it may almost be said, every poetry is a philosophy. The poet and the philosopher live in the same world and are interested in the same truths. What is the nature of man and the world in which he lives, and what, in consequence, should be our conduct? These are the great problems the answers to which may take a religious, a poetical, a philosophical, or an artistic form. The difference is that the poet has intuitions, while the philosopher gives demonstrations; that the thought which in one mind is converted into emotion is in the other resolved into logic; and that a symbolic representation of the idea is substituted for a direct expression. The normal relation is exhibited in the case of the anatomist and the sculptor. The artist intuitively recognises the most perfect form; the man of science analyses the structural relations by which it is produced. Though the two provinces are concentric they are not coincident. The reasoner is interested in many details which have no immediate significance for the man of feeling; and the poetic insight, on the other hand, is capable of recognising subtle harmonies and discords of which our crude instruments of weighing and measuring are incapable of revealing the secret. But the connection is so close that greatest works of either kind seem to have a double nature. A philosophy may, like Spinoza's, be apparelled in the most technical and abstruse panoply of logic, and yet the total impression may stimulate a religious sentiment as effectively as any poetic or theosophic mysticism. Or a great imaginative work, like Shakspeare's, may present us with the most vivid concrete symbols, and yet suggest, as forcibly as the formal demonstrations of a metaphysician, the idealist conviction that the visible and tangible world is a dream-woven tissue covering infinite and inscrutable mysteries. In each case the highest intellectual faculty manifests itself in the vigour with which certain profound conceptions of the world and life have been grasped and assimilated. In each case that man is greatest who soars habitually to the highest regions and gazes most steadily upon the widest horizons of time and space. The logical consistency which frames all dogmas into a consistent whole is but another aspect of the imaginative power which harmonises the strongest and subtlest emotions excited. The task, indeed, of deducing the philosophy from the poetry, of inferring what a man thinks from what he feels, may at times perplex the acutest critic. Nor, if it were satisfactorily accomplished, could we infer that the best philosopher is also the best poet. Absolute inca-

poetry for poetical expression may be combined with the highest philosophic power. All that can safely be said is that a man's thoughts, whether embodied in symbols or worked out in syllogisms, are more valuable in proportion as they indicate greater philosophical insight; and therefore that, *ceteris paribus*, that man is the greater poet whose imagination is most transfused with reason; who has the deepest truths to proclaim as well as the strongest feelings to utter.

Some theorists implicitly deny this principle by holding substantially that the poet's function is simply the utterance of a particular mood, and that, if he utters it forcibly and delicately, we have no more to ask. Even so, we should not admit that the thoughts suggested to a wise man by a prospect of death and eternity are of just equal value, if equally well expressed, with the thoughts suggested to a fool by the contemplation of a good dinner. But, in practice, the utterance of emotions can hardly be dissociated from the assertion of principles. Psychologists have shown, ever since the days of Berkeley, that when a man describes (as he thinks) a mere sensation, and says, for example, "I see a house," he is really recording the result of a complex logical process. A great painter and the dullest observer may have the same impressions of coloured blotches upon their retina. The great man infers the true nature of the objects which produce his sensations, and can therefore represent the objects accurately. The other sees only with his eyes, and can therefore represent nothing. There is thus a logic implied even in the simplest observation, and one which can be tested by mathematical rules as distinctly as a proposition in geometry.

When we have to find a language for our emotions instead of our sensations, we generally express the result of an incomparably more complex set of intellectual operations. The poet, in uttering his joy or sadness, often implies, in the very form of his language, a whole philosophy of life or of the universe. The explanation is given at the end of Shakespeare's familiar passage about the poet's eye:

Such tricks hath strong imagination
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!

The apprehension of the passion, as Shakespeare logically says, is a comprehension of its cause. The imagination reasons. The bare faculty of sight involves thought and feeling. The symbol which the fancy spontaneously constructs implies a whole world of truth or error, of superstitious beliefs or sound philosophy. The poetry holds a number of intellectual dogmas in solution; and it is precisely due to these general dogmas, which are true and important for us as well as for the poet, that his power over our sympathies is due. If his philosophy has no power in it, his emotions lose their hold upon our minds, or interest us only as antiquarians and lovers of the picturesque. But in the briefest poems of a

true thinker we read the essence of the life-long reflections of a passionate and intellectual nature. Fears and hopes common to all thoughtful men have been coined into a single phrase. Even in cases where no definite conviction is expressed or even implied, and the poem is simply, like music, an indefinite utterance of a certain state of the emotions, we may discover an intellectual element. The rational and the emotional nature have such intricate relations that one cannot exist in great richness and force without justifying an inference as to the other. From a single phrase, as from a single gesture, we can often go far to divining the character of a man's thoughts and feelings. We know more of a man from five minutes' talk than from pages of what is called "psychological analysis." From a passing expression on the face, itself the result of variations so minute as to defy all analysis, we instinctively frame judgments as to a man's temperament and habitual modes of thought and conduct. Indeed, such judgments, if erroneous, determine us only too exclusively in the most important relations of life.

Now the highest poetry is that which expresses the richest, most powerful, and most susceptible emotional nature, and the most versatile, penetrative, and subtle intellect. Such qualities may be stamped upon trifling work. The great artist can express his power within the limits of a coin or a gem. The great poet will reveal his character through a sonnet or a song. Shakspeare, or Milton, or Burns, or Wordsworth can express their whole mode of feeling within a few lines. An ill-balanced nature reveals itself by a discord, as an illogical mind by a fallacy. A man need not compose an epic on a system of philosophy to write himself down an ass. And, inversely, a great mind and a noble nature may show itself by impalpable but recognisable signs within the "sonnet's scanty plot of ground." Once more, the highest poetry must be that which expresses not only the richest but the healthiest nature. Disease means an absence or a want of balance of certain faculties, and therefore leads to false reasoning or emotional discord. The defect of character betrays itself in some erroneous mode of thought or baseness of sentiment. And since morality means obedience to those rules which are most essential to the spiritual health, vicious feeling indicates some morbid tendency, and is so far destructive of the poetical faculty. An immoral sentiment is the sign either of a false judgment of the world and of human nature, or of a defect in the emotional nature which shows itself by a discord or an indecorum, and leads to a cynicism or indecency which offends the reason through the taste. What is called immorality does not indeed always imply such defects. Sound moral intuitions may be opposed to the narrow code prevalent at the time; or a protest against puritanical or ascetic perversions of the standard may hurry the poet into attacks upon true principles. And, again, the keen sensibility which makes a man a poet, undoubtedly exposes him to certain types of disease. He is more likely than his thickskinned neighbour to be vexed by evil and to be drawn into distorted views of life by an excess of sympathy or indigna-

tion. Injudicious admirers prize the disease instead of the strength from which it springs; and value the cynicism or the despair instead of the contempt for heartless commonplace or the desire for better things with which it was unfortunately connected. A strong moral sentiment has a great value, even when forced into an unnatural alliance. Nay, even when it is, so to speak, inverted, it often receives a kind of paradoxical value from its efficacy against some opposite form of error. It is only a complete absence of the moral faculty which is irredeemably bad. The poet in whom it does not exist is condemned to the lower sphere, and can only deal with the deepest feelings on penalty of shocking us by indecency or profanity. A man who can revel in "Epicurus' sty" without even the indirect homage to purity of remorse and bitterness, can do nothing but gratify our lowest passions. They, perhaps, have their place, and even the man who satisfies them may not be utterly worthless. But to place him on a level with his betters is to confound every sound principle of criticism.

It follows that a kind of collateral test of poetical excellence may be found by extracting the philosophy from the poetry. The test is, of course, inadequate. A good philosopher may be an execrable poet. Even stupidity is happily not inconsistent with sound doctrine, though inconsistent with a firm grasp of ultimate principles. But the vigour with which a man grasps and assimilates a deep moral doctrine is a test of the degree in which he possesses one essential condition of the higher poetical excellence. A continuous illustration of this principle is given in the poetry of Wordsworth, who, indeed, has expounded his ethical and philosophical views so explicitly that great part of the work is done to our hands. Nowhere is it easier to observe the mode in which poetry and philosophy spring from the same root, and owe their excellence to the same intellectual powers. So much has been said by the ablest critics of the purely poetical side of Wordsworth's genius, that I may willingly renounce the difficult task of adding or repeating. I gladly take for granted—what is generally acknowledged—that Wordsworth in his best moods reaches a greater height than any other modern Englishman. The word "inspiration" is less forced when applied to his loftiest poetry than when used of any of his contemporaries. With defects too obvious to be mentioned, he can yet pierce furthest behind the veil; and embody most efficiently the thoughts and emotions which come to us in our most solemn and reflective moods. Other poetry becomes trifling when we are making our inevitable passages through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Wordsworth's alone retains its power. We love him the more as we grow older and become more deeply impressed with the sadness and seriousness of life; we are apt to grow weary of his rivals when we have finally quitted the regions of youthful enchantment. And I take the explanation to be that he is not merely a melodious writer, or a powerful utterer of deep emotion, but a true philosopher. His poetry wears well because it has solid substance. He is a prophet and a moralist, as well as a mere singer. His ethical system, in particular

is as distinctive and capable of systematic exposition as that of Butler. By endeavouring to state it in plain prose, we shall see how the poetical power implies a sensitiveness to ideas which, when extracted from the symbolical embodiment, fall spontaneously into a scientific system of thought.

There are two opposite types to which all moral systems tend. They correspond to the two great intellectual families to which every man belongs by right of birth. One class of minds is distinguished by its firm grasp of facts, by its reluctance to drop solid substance for the loveliest shadows, and by its preference of concrete truths to the most symmetrical of theories. In ethical questions the tendency of such minds is to consider man as a being impelled by strong but unreasonable passions towards tangible objects. He is a loving, hating, thirsting, hungering—anything but a reasoning—being. As Swift—a typical example of this intellectual temperament—declared, man is not an *animal rationale*, but at most *capax rationis*. At bottom, he is a machine worked by blind instincts. Their tendency cannot be deduced by *à priori* reasoning, though reason may calculate the consequences of indulging them. The passions are equally good, so far as equally pleasurable. Virtue means that course of conduct which secures the maximum of pleasure. Fine theories about abstract rights and correspondence to eternal truths are so many words. They provide decent masks for our passions; they do not really govern them, or alter their nature, but they cover the ugly brutal selfishness of mankind, and soften the shock of conflicting interests. Such a view has something in it congenial to the English love of reality and contempt for shams. It may be represented by Swift or Mandeville in the last century; in poetry it corresponds to the theory attributed by some critics—such as M. Taine—to Shakspeare; in a frigid and reasoning mind it leads to the utilitarianism of Bentham; in a proud, passionate, and imaginative mind it manifests itself in such a poem as *Don Juan*. Its strength is in its grasp of fact; its weakness, in its tendency to cynicism. Opposed to this is the school which starts from abstract reason. It prefers to dwell in the ideal world, where principles may be contemplated apart from the accidents which render them obscure to vulgar minds. It seeks to deduce the moral code from eternal truths, without seeking for a groundwork in the facts of experience. If facts refuse to conform to theories, it proposes that facts should be summarily abolished. Though the actual human being is, unfortunately, not always reasonable, it holds that pure reason must be in the long run the dominant force, and that it reveals the laws to which mankind will ultimately conform. The revolutionary doctrine of the “rights of man” expressed one form of this doctrine, and showed in the most striking way a strength and weakness, which are the converse of those exhibited by its antagonist. It was strong as appealing to the loftier motives of justice and sympathy; and weak as defying the appeal to experience. The most striking example in English literature is in Godwin’s *Political Justice*.

The existing social order is to be calmly abolished because founded upon blind prejudice; the constituent atoms called men are to be rearranged in an ideal order as in a mathematical diagram. Shelley gives the translation of this theory into poetry. The *Revolt of Islam* or the *Prometheus Unbound*, with all their unearthly beauty, weary the imagination which tries to soar into the thin air of Shelley's dreamworld; just as the intellect, trying to apply the abstract formulæ of political metaphysics to any concrete problem, feels as though it were under an exhausted receiver. In both cases we seem to have got entirely out of the region of real human passions and senses into a world, beautiful perhaps, but certainly impalpable.

The great aim of moral philosophy is to unite the disjointed elements, to end the divorce between reason and experience, and to escape from the alternative of dealing with empty but symmetrical formulæ or concrete and chaotic facts. No hint can be given here as to the direction in which a final solution must be sought. Whatever the true method, Wordsworth's mode of conceiving the problem shows how powerfully he grasped the questions at issue. If his doctrines are not systematically expounded, they all have a direct bearing upon the real difficulties involved. They are stated so forcibly in his noblest poems that we might almost express a complete theory in his own language. But, without seeking to make a collection of aphorisms from his poetry, we may indicate the cardinal points of his teaching.

The most characteristic of all his doctrines is that which is embodied in the great ode upon the *Intimations of Immortality*. The doctrine itself—the theory that the instincts of childhood testify to the pre-existence of the soul—sounds fanciful enough; and Wordsworth took rather unnecessary pains to say that he did not hold it as a serious dogma. We certainly need not ask whether it is reasonable or orthodox to believe that "our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting." The fact symbolised by the poetic fancy—the glory and freshness of our childish instincts—is equally noteworthy, whatever its cause. Some modern reasoners would explain its significance by reference to a very different kind of pre-existence. The instincts, they would say, are valuable, because they register the accumulated and inherited experience of past generations. Wordsworth's delight in wild scenery is regarded by them as due to the "combination of states that were organised in the race during barbarous times, when its pleasurable activities were amongst the mountains, woods, and waters." In childhood we are most completely under the dominion of these inherited impulses. The correlation between the organism and its medium is then most perfect, and hence the peculiar theme of childish communion with nature.

Wordsworth would have repudiated the doctrine with disgust. He would have been "on the side of the angels." No memories of the savage and the monkey, but the reminiscences of the once glorious soul, could explain his emotions. Yet there is this much in common between him and the men of science whom he denounced with too little

discrimination. The fact of the value of these primitive instincts is admitted, and admitted for the same purpose. Man, it is agreed, is furnished with sentiments which cannot be explained as the result of his individual experience. They may be intelligible, according to the evolutionist, when regarded as embodying the past experience of the race; or, according to Wordsworth, as implying a certain mysterious faculty imprinted upon the soul. The scientific doctrine, whether sound or not, has modified the whole mode of approaching ethical problems; and Wordsworth, though with a very different purpose, gives a new emphasis to the facts, upon a recognition of which, according to some theorists, must be based the reconciliation of the great rival schools—the intuitionists and the utilitarians. The parallel may at first sight seem fanciful; and it would be too daring to claim for Wordsworth the discovery of the most remarkable phenomenon which modern psychology must take into account. There is, however, a real connection between the two doctrines, though in one sense they are almost antithetical. Meanwhile we observe that the same sensibility which gives poetical power is necessary to the scientific observer. The magic of the ode, and of many other passages in Wordsworth's poetry, is due to his recognition of this mysterious efficacy of our childish instincts. He gives emphasis to one of the most striking facts of our spiritual experience, which had passed with little notice from professed psychologists. He feels what they afterwards tried to explain.

The full meaning of the doctrine comes out as we study Wordsworth more thoroughly. Other poets—almost all poets—have dwelt fondly upon recollections of childhood. But, not feeling so strongly, and therefore not expressing so forcibly, the peculiar character of the emotion, they have not derived the same lessons from their observation. The Epicurean poets are content with Herrick's simple moral—

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may—

and with his simple explanation—

That age is best which is the first,

When youth and blood are warmer.

Others more thoughtful look back upon the early days with the passionate regret of Byron's verses:

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,

When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Such painful longings for the "tender grace of a day that is dead" are spontaneous and natural. Every healthy mind feels the pang in proportion to the strength of its affections. But it is also true that the regret resembles too often the maudlin meditation of a fast young man over his morning's soda-water. It implies, that is, a non-recognition of the higher uses to which the fading memories may still be put. A different tone breathes in Shelley's pathetic but rather hectic moralisings, and his lamentations over the departure of the "spirit of delight." Nowhere has

it found more exquisite expression than in the marvellous *Ode to the West Wind*. These magical verses—his best, as it seems to me—describe the reflection of the poet's own mind in the strange stir and commotion of a dying winter's day. They represent, we may say, the fitful melancholy which oppresses a noble spirit when it has recognised the difficulty of forcing facts into conformity with the ideal. He still clings to the hope that his "dead thoughts" may be driven over the universe,

Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth.

But he bows before the inexorable fate which has cramped his energies :

A heavy weight of years has chained and bowed
One too like thee ; tameless and swift and proud.

Neither Byron nor Shelley can see any satisfactory solution, and therefore neither can reach a perfect harmony of feeling. The world seems to them to be out of joint, because they have not known how to accept the inevitable nor to conform to the discipline of facts. And, therefore, however intense the emotion, and however exquisite its expression, we are left in a state of intellectual and emotional discontent. Such utterances may suit us in youth, when we can afford to play with sorrow. As we grow older, we feel a certain emptiness in them. A true man ought not to sit down and weep with an exhausted debauchee. He cannot afford to confess himself beaten with the idealist who has discovered that Rome was not built in a day, nor revolutions made with rose-water. He has to work as long as he has strength ; to work in spite of, even by strength of, sorrow, disappointment, wounded vanity, and blunted sensibilities ; and therefore he must search for some profounder solution for the dark riddle of life.

This solution it is Wordsworth's chief aim to supply. In the familiar verses, which stand as a motto to his poems—

The child is father to the man,
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety—

the great problem of life, that is, as he conceives it, is to secure a continuity between the period at which we are guided by half-conscious instincts and that in which a man is able to supply the place of these primitive impulses by reasoned convictions. This is the thought which comes over and over again in his deepest poems, and round which all his teaching centred. It supplies the great moral, for example, of the *Leech-gatherer* :

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood :
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith still rich in genial good.

When his faith is tried by harsh experience, the leech-gatherer comes,

Like a man from some far region sent
To give me human strength by oft admonishment ;

for he shows how the "genial faith" may be converted into permanent

strength by resolution and independence. The verses most commonly quoted, such as

We poets in our youth begin in gladness,
But thereof come in the end despondency and sadness,

give the ordinary view of the sickly school. Wordsworth's aim is to supply an answer worthy not only of a poet, but a man. The same sentiment again is expressed in the grand *Ode to Duty*, where the

Stern daughter of the voice of God

is invoked to supply that "genial sense of youth" which has hitherto been a sufficient guidance; or in the majestic morality of the *Happy Warrior*; or in the noble verses on *Tintern Abbey*; or, finally, in the great ode which gives most completely the whole theory of that process by which our early intuitions are to be transformed into settled principles of feeling and action.

Wordsworth's philosophical theory, in short, depends upon the asserted identity between our childish instincts and our enlightened reason. The doctrine of a state of pre-existence, as it appears in other writers—as, for example, in the Cambridge Platonists,*—was connected with an obsolete metaphysical system, and the doctrine—exploded in its old form—of innate ideas. Wordsworth does not attribute any such preternatural character to the "blank misgivings" and "shadowy recollections" of which he speaks. They are invaluable data of our spiritual experience; but they do not entitle us to lay down dogmatic propositions independently of experience. They are spontaneous products of a nature in harmony with the universe in which it is placed, and inestimable as a clear indication that such a harmony exists. To interpret and regulate them belongs to the reasoning faculty and the higher imagination of later years. If he does not quite distinguish between the province of reason and emotion—the most difficult of philosophical problems—he keeps clear of the cruder mysticism, because he does not seek to elicit any definite formulæ from those admittedly vague forebodings which lie on the border land between the two sides of our nature. With his invariable sanity of mind, he more than once notices the difficulty of distinguishing between that which nature teaches us and the interpretations which we impose upon nature.† He carefully refrains from pressing the inference too far.

The teaching, indeed, assumes that view of the universe which is implied in his pantheistic language. The Divinity really reveals himself in the lonely mountains and the starry heavens. By contemplating them we are able to rise into that "blessed mood" in which for a time the burden of the mystery is rolled off our souls, and we can "see into the life of things." And here we must admit that Wordsworth is not entirely free from the weakness which generally besets thinkers of this tendency. Like Shaftesbury in the previous century, who speaks of the

* See, for example, Henry More's poem on the *Pre-existence of the Soul*.

† As, for example, in the *Lines on Tintern Abbey*: "If this be but a vain belief."

universal harmony as emphatically though not as poetically as Wordsworth, he is tempted to adopt a too facile optimism. He seems at times to have overlooked that dark side of nature which is recognised in theological doctrines of corruption, or in the scientific theories about the fierce struggle for existence. Can we in fact say that these early instincts prove more than the happy constitution of the individual who feels them? Is there not a teaching of nature very apt to suggest horror and despair rather than a complacent brooding over soothing thoughts? Do not the mountains which Wordsworth loved so well speak of decay and catastrophe in every line of their slopes? Do they not suggest the helplessness and narrow limitations of man, as forcibly as his possible exaltation? The awe which they strike into our souls has its terrible as well as its amiable side; and in moods of depression the darker aspect becomes more conspicuous than the brighter. Nay, if we admit that we have instincts which are the very substance of all that afterwards becomes ennobling, have we not also instincts which suggest a close alliance with the brutes? If the child amidst his newborn blisses suggests a heavenly origin, does he not also show sensual and cruel instincts which imply at least an admixture of baser elements? If man is responsive to all natural influences, how is he to distinguish between the good and the bad, and, in short, to frame a conscience out of the vague instincts which contain the germs of all the possible developments of the future?

To say that Wordsworth has not given a complete answer to such difficulties is to say that he has not explained the origin of evil. It may be admitted, however, that he does to a certain extent show a narrowness of conception. The voice of nature, as he says, resembles an echo; but we "unthinking creatures" listen to "voices of two different natures." We do not always distinguish between the echo of our lower passions and the "echoes from beyond the grave." Wordsworth sometimes fails to recognise the ambiguity of the oracle to which he appeals. The "blessed mood" in which we get rid of the burden of the world is too easily confused with the mood in which we simply refuse to attend to it. He finds lonely meditation so inspiring that he is too indifferent to the troubles of less self-sufficing or clear-sighted human beings. The ambiguity makes itself felt in the sphere of morality. The ethical doctrine that virtue consists in conformity to nature becomes ambiguous with him, as with all its advocates, when we ask for a precise definition of nature. How are we to know which natural forces make for us and which fight against us?

The doctrine of the love of nature, generally regarded as Wordsworth's great lesson to mankind, means, as interpreted by himself and others, a love of the wilder and grander objects of natural scenery; a passion for the "sounding cataract," the rock, the mountain, and the forest; a preference, therefore, of the country to the town, and of the simpler to the more complex forms of social life. But what is the true value of this sentiment? The unfortunate Solitary in the *Excursion* is beset by three

Wordsworths; for the Wanderer and the Pastor are little more (as Wordsworth indeed intimates) than reflections of himself, seen in different mirrors. The Solitary represents the anti-social lessons to be derived from communion with nature. He has become a misanthrope, and has learnt from *Candide* the lesson that we clearly do not live in the best of all possible worlds. Instead of learning the true lesson from nature by penetrating its deeper meanings, he manages to feed

Pity and scorn and melancholy pride

by accidental and fanciful analogies, and sees in rock pyramids or obelisks a rude mockery of human toils. To confute this sentiment, to upset *Candide*,

This dull product of a scoffer's pen,

is the purpose of the lofty poetry and versified prose of the long dialogues which ensue. That Wordsworth should call Voltaire dull is a curious example of the proverbial blindness of controversialists; but the moral may be equally good. It is given most pithily in the lines—

We live by admiration, hope, and love;
And even as these are well and wisely fused,
The dignity of being we ascend.

"But what is Error?" continues the preacher; and the Solitary replies by saying, "somewhat haughtily," that love, admiration, and hope are "mad fancy's favourite vassals." The distinction between fancy and imagination is, in brief, that fancy deals with the superficial resemblances, and imagination with the deeper truths which underlie them. The purpose, then, of the *Excursion*, and of Wordsworth's poetry in general, is to show how the higher faculty reveals a harmony which we overlook when, with the Solitary, we

Skim along the surfaces of things.

The rightly prepared mind can recognise the divine harmony which underlies all apparent disorder. The universe is to its perceptions like the shell whose murmur in a child's ear seems to express a mysterious union with the sea. But the mind must be rightly prepared. Everything depends upon the point of view. One man, as he says in an elaborate figure, looking upon a series of ridges in spring from their northern side, sees a waste of snow, and from the south a continuous expanse of green. That view, we must take it, is the right one which is illuminated by the "ray divine." But we must train our eyes to recognise its splendour; and the final answer to the Solitary is therefore embodied in a series of narratives showing by example how our spiritual vision may be purified or obscured. Our philosophy must be finally based, not upon abstract speculation and metaphysical arguments, but on the diffused consciousness of the healthy mind. As Butler sees the universe by the light of conscience, Wordsworth sees it through the wider emotions of awe, reverence, and love, produced in a sound nature.

The pantheistic conception, in short, leads to an unsatisfactory optimism in the general view of nature, and to an equal tolerance of all passions as

equally "natural." To escape from this difficulty we must establish some more discriminative mode of interpreting nature. Man is the instrument played upon by all impulses, good or bad. The music which results may be harmonious or discordant. When the instrument is in tune, the music will be perfect; but when is it in tune, and how are we to know that it is in tune? That problem once solved, we can tell which are the authentic utterances and which are the accidental discords. And by solving it, or by saying what is the right constitution of human beings, we shall discover which is the true philosophy of the universe, and what are the dictates of a sound moral sense. Wordsworth implicitly answers the question by explaining, in his favourite phrase, how we are to build up our moral being.

The voice of nature speaks at first in vague emotions, scarcely distinguishable from mere animal buoyancy. The boy, hooting in mimicry of the owls, receives in his heart the voice of mountain torrents and the solemn imagery of rocks, and woods, and stars. The sportive girl is unconsciously moulded into stateliness and grace by the floating clouds, the bending willow, and even by silent sympathy with the motions of the storm. Nobody has ever shown with such exquisite power as Wordsworth how much of the charm of natural objects in later life is due to early associations thus formed in a mind not yet capable of contemplating its own processes. As old Matthew says in the lines which, however familiar, can never be read without emotion—

My eyes are dim with childlike tears,
My heart is idly stirred;
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

And the strangely beautiful address to the Cuckoo might be made into a text for a prologued commentary by an æsthetic philosopher upon the power of early association. It curiously illustrates, for example, the reason of Wordsworth's delight in recalling sounds. The croak of the distant raven, the bleat of the mountain lamb, the splash of the leaping fish in the lonely tarn, are specially delightful to him, because the hearing is the most spiritual of our senses; and these sounds, like the cuckoo's cry, seem to convert the earth into an "unsubstantial fairy place." The phrase "association" indeed implies a certain arbitrariness in the images suggested, which is not quite in accordance with Wordsworth's feeling. Though the echo depends partly upon the hearer, the mountain voices are specially adapted for certain moods. They have, we may say, a spontaneous affinity for the nobler affections. If some early passage in our childhood is associated with a particular spot, a house or a street will bring back the petty and accidental details; a mountain or a lake will revive the deeper and more permanent elements of feeling. If you have made love in a palace, according to Mr. Disraeli's prescription, the sight of it will recall the splendour of the object's dress or jewellery; if, as Wordsworth would prefer, with a background of mountains, it will appear

in later days as if they had absorbed, and were always ready again to radiate forth, the tender and hallowing influences which then for the first time entered your life. The elementary and deepest passions are most easily associated with the sublime and beautiful in nature.

The primal duties shine aloft like stars ;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of man, like flowers.

And, therefore, if you have been happy enough to take delight in these natural and universal objects in the early days, when the most permanent associations are formed, the sight of them in later days will bring back by preordained and divine symbolism whatever was most ennobling in your early feelings. The vulgarising associations will drop off of themselves, and what was pure and lofty will remain.

From this natural law follows another of Wordsworth's favourite precepts. The mountains are not with him a symbol of anti-social feelings. On the contrary, they are in their proper place as the background of the simple domestic affections. He loves his native hills, not in the Byronic fashion, as a savage wilderness, but as the appropriate framework in which a healthy social order can permanently maintain itself. That, for example, is, as he tells us, the thought which inspired the *Brothers*, a poem which excels all modern idylls in weight of meaning and depth of feeling, by virtue of the idea thus embodied. The retired valley of Ennerdale, with its grand background of hills, precipitous enough to be fairly called mountains, forces the two lads into closer affection. Shut in by these "enormous barriers," and undistracted by the ebb and flow of the outside world, the mutual love becomes concentrated. A tie like that of family blood is involuntarily imposed upon the little community of dalesmen. The image of sheep-tracks and shepherds clad in country grey is stamped upon the elder brother's mind, and comes back to him in tropical calms ; he hears the tones of his waterfalls in the piping shrouds ; and, when he returns, recognises every fresh scar made by winter storms on the mountain sides, and knows by sight every unmarked grave in the little churchyard. The fraternal affection sanctifies the scenery, and the sight of the scenery brings back the affection with overpowering force upon his return. This is everywhere the sentiment inspired in Wordsworth by his beloved hills. It is not so much the love of nature pure and simple, as of nature seen through the deepest human feelings. The light glimmering in a lonely cottage, the one rude house in the deep valley, with its "small lot of life-supporting fields and guardian rocks," are necessary to point the moral and to draw to a definite focus the various forces of sentiment. The two veins of feeling are inseparably blended. The peasant-noble, in the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, learns equally from men and nature :

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and hills,
The silence that is in the starry skies,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

Without the love, the silence and the sleep would have had no spiritual meaning. They are valuable as giving intensity and solemnity to the positive emotion.

The same remark is to be made upon Wordsworth's favourite teaching of the advantages of the contemplative life. He is fond of enforcing the doctrine of the familiar lines, that we can feed our minds "in a wise passiveness," and that

One impulse from the vernal wood
Can teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

And, according to some commentators, this would seem to express the doctrine that the ultimate end of life is the cultivation of tender emotions without reference to action. The doctrine, thus absolutely stated, would be immoral and illogical. To recommend contemplation in preference to action is like preferring sleeping to waking; or saying, as a full expression of the truth, that silence is golden and speech silver. Like that familiar phrase, Wordsworth's teaching is not to be interpreted literally. The essence of such maxims is to be one-sided. They are paradoxical in order to be emphatic. To have seasons of contemplation, of withdrawal from the world and from books, of calm surrendering of ourselves to the influences of nature, is a practice commended in one form or other by all moral teachers. It is a sanitary rule, resting upon obvious principles. The mind which is always occupied in a multiplicity of small observations, or the regulation of practical details, loses the power of seeing general principles and of associating all objects with the central emotions of "admiration, hope, and love." The philosophic mind is that which habitually sees the general in the particular, and finds food for the deepest thought in the simplest objects. It requires, therefore, periods of repose, in which the fragmentary and complex atoms of distracted feeling which make up the incessant whirl of daily life may have time to crystallise round the central thoughts. But it must feed in order to assimilate; and each process implies the other as its correlative. A constant interest, therefore, in the joys and sorrows of our neighbours is as essential as quiet, self-centred rumination. It is when the eye "has kept watch o'er man's mortality," and by virtue of the tender sympathies of "the human heart by which we live," that to us

The meanest flower which blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The solitude which implies severance from natural sympathies and affections is poisonous. The happiness of the heart which lives alone,

Housed in a dream, an outcast from the kind,

Is to be pitied, for 'tis surely blind.

Wordsworth's meditations upon flowers or animal life are impressive because they have been touched by this constant sympathy. The sermon is always in his mind, and therefore every stone may serve for a text.

His contemplation enables him to see the pathetic side of the small pains and pleasures which we are generally in too great a hurry to notice. There are times, of course, when this moralising tendency leads him to the regions of the namby-pamby or stern prosaic platitude. On the other hand, no one approaches him in the power of touching some rich chord of feeling by help of the pettiest incident. The old man going to the fox-hunt with a tear on his cheek, and saying to himself,

The key I must take, for my Helen is dead ;

or the mother carrying home her dead sailor's bird ; the village school-master, in whom a rift in the clouds revives the memory of his little daughter ; the old huntsman unable to cut through the stump of rotten wood—touch our hearts at once and for ever. The secret is given in the rather prosaic apology for not relating a tale about poor Simon Lee :

O reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.

The value of silent thought is so to cultivate the primitive emotions that they may flow spontaneously upon every common incident, and that every familiar object becomes symbolic of them. It is a familiar remark that a philosopher or man of science who has devoted himself to meditation upon some principle or law of nature, is always finding new illustrations in the most unexpected quarters. He cannot take up a novel or walk across the street without hitting upon appropriate instances. Wordsworth would apply the principle to the building up of our "moral being." Admiration, hope, and love should be so constantly in our thoughts, that innumerable sights and sounds which are meaningless to the world, should become to us a language incessantly suggestive of the deepest topics of thought.

This explains his dislike to science, as he understood the word, and his denunciations of the "world." The man of science is one who cuts up nature into fragments, and not only neglects their possible significance for our higher feelings, but refrains on principle from taking it into account. The primrose suggests to him some new device in classification, and he would be worried by the suggestion of any spiritual significance as an annoying distraction. Viewing all objects "in disconnection, dead and spiritless," we are thus really waging

An impious warfare with the very life
Of our own souls.

We are putting the letter in place of the spirit, and dealing with nature as a mere grammarian deals with a poem. When we have learnt to associate every object with some lesson

Of human suffering or of human joy ;
when we have thus obtained the "glorious habit,"

By which sense is made
 Subservient still to moral purposes,
 Auxiliar to divine;

the "dull eye" of science will light up; for, in observing natural processes, it will carry with it an incessant reference to the spiritual processes to which they are allied. Science, in short, requires to be brought into intimate connection with morality and religion. If we are forced for our immediate purpose to pursue truth for itself, regardless of consequences, we must remember all the more carefully that truth is a whole; and that fragmentary bits of knowledge become valuable as they are incorporated into a general system. The tendency of modern times to specialism brings with it a characteristic danger. It requires to be supplemented by a correlative process of integration. We must study details to increase our knowledge; we must accustom ourselves to look at the detail in the light of the general principles in order to make it fruitful.

The influence of that world which "is too much with us late and soon" is of the same kind. The man of science loves barren facts for their own sake. The man of the world becomes devoted to some petty pursuit without reference to ultimate ends. He becomes a slave to money, or power, or praise, without caring for their effect upon his moral character. As social organisation becomes more complete, the social unit becomes a mere fragment instead of being a complete whole in himself. Man becomes

The senseless member of a vast machine,
 Servin as doth a spindle or a wheel.

The division of labour, celebrated with such enthusiasm by Adam Smith,* tends to crush all real life out of its victims. The soul of the political economist may rejoice when he sees a human being devoting his whole faculties to the performance of one subsidiary operation in the manufacture of a pin. The poet and the moralist must notice with anxiety the contrast between the old-fashioned peasant who, if he discharged each particular function clumsily, discharged at least many functions, and found exercise for all the intellectual and moral faculties of his nature, and the modern artisan doomed to the incessant repetition of one petty set of muscular expansions and contractions, and whose soul, if he has one, is therefore rather an encumbrance than otherwise. This is the evil which is constantly before Wordsworth's eyes, as it has certainly not become less prominent since his time. The danger of crushing the individual is a serious one according to his view; not because it implies the neglect of some abstract political rights, but from the impoverishment of character which is implied in the process. Give every man a vote, and abolish all interference with each man's private tastes, and the danger may still be as great as ever. The tendency to "differentiation"—as we call it in modern phraseology—the social pulverisation, the lowering and narrowing of the individual's sphere of action and feeling to the pettiest

* See Wordsworth's reference to the *Wealth of Nations*, in the *Prelude*, book xiii.

details, depends upon processes underlying all political changes. It cannot, therefore, be cured by any nostrum of constitution-mongers, or by the negative remedy of removing old barriers. It requires to be met by profounder moral and religious teaching. Men must be taught what is the really valuable part of their natures and what is the purest happiness to be extracted from life, as well as allowed to gratify fully their own tastes; for who can say that men encouraged by all their surroundings and appeals to the most obvious motives to turn themselves into machines, will not deliberately choose to be machines? Many powerful thinkers have illustrated Wordsworth's doctrine more elaborately; but nobody has gone more decisively to the root of the matter.

One other side of Wordsworth's teaching is still more significant and original. Our vague instincts are consolidated into reason by meditation, sympathy with our fellows, communion with nature, and a constant devotion to "high endeavours." If life run smoothly, the transformation may be easy, and our primitive optimism turn imperceptibly into general complacency. The trial comes when we make personal acquaintance with sorrow, and our early buoyancy begins to fail. We are tempted to become querulous or to lap ourselves in indifference. Most poets are content to bewail our lot melodiously, and admit that there is no remedy unless a remedy be found in "the luxury of grief." Prosaic people become selfish, though not sentimental. They laugh at their old illusions, and turn to the solid consolations of comfort. Nothing is more melancholy than to study many biographies and note—not the failure of early promise which may mean merely an aiming above the mark—but the progressive deterioration of character which so often follows grief and disappointment. If it be not true that most men grow worse as they grow old, it is surely true that few men pass through the world without being corrupted as much as purified.

Now Wordsworth's favourite lesson is the possibility of turning grief and disappointment into account. He teaches in many forms the necessity of "transmuting" sorrow into strength. One of the great evils is a lack of power

An agonising sorrow to transmute.

The Happy Warrior is, above all, the man who in face of all human miseries can

Exercise a power

Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them, and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives;

who is made more compassionate by familiarity with sorrow, more placable by contest, purer by temptation, and more enduring by distress.*

* So, too, in the *Prelude*:

Then was the truth received into my heart
That, under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,
If from the affliction somewhere do not grow
Honour which could not else have been, a faith,

It is owing to the constant presence of this thought, to his sensibility to the refining influence of sorrow, that Wordsworth is the only poet who will bear reading in times of distress. Other poets mock us by an impossible optimism, or merely reflect the feelings which, however we may play with them in times of cheerfulness, have now become an intolerable burden. Wordsworth suggests the single topic which, so far at least as this world is concerned, can really be called consolatory. None of the ordinary commonplaces will serve, or serve at most as indications of human sympathy. But there is some consolation in the thought that even death may bind the survivors closer, and leave as a legacy enduring motives to noble action. It is easy to say this; but Wordsworth has the merit of feeling the truth in all its force, and expressing it by the most forcible images. In one shape or another the sentiment is embodied in most of his really powerful poetry. It is intended, for example, to be the moral of the *White Doe of Rylstone*. There, as Wordsworth says, everything fails so far as its object is external and substantial; everything succeeds so far as it is moral and spiritual. Success grows out of failure; and the mode in which it grows is indicated by the lines which give the key-note of the poem. Emily, the heroine, is to become a soul

By force of sorrows high
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed serenity.

The *White Doe* is one of those poems which makes many readers inclined to sympathise with Jeffrey's celebrated dictum, "This will never do;" and I confess that I am not one of its warm admirers. The sentiment seems to be unduly relaxed throughout; there is a want of sympathy with heroism of the rough and active type, which is, after all, at least as worthy of admiration as the more passive variety of the virtue; and the defect is made more palpable by the position of the chief actors. These rough borderers, who recall William of Deloraine and Dandie Dinmont, are somehow out of their element when preaching the doctrines of quietism and submission to circumstances. But, whatever our judgment of this particular embodiment of Wordsworth's moral philosophy, the inculcation of the same lesson gives force to many of his finest poems. It is enough to mention the *Leech-gatherer*, the *Stanzas on Peele Castle*, *Michael*, and, as expressing the inverse view of the futility of idle grief, *Laodamia*, where he has succeeded in combining his morality with more than his ordinary beauty of poetical form. The teaching of all these poems falls in with the doctrine already set forth. All moral teaching, I have sometimes fancied, might be summed up in the one formula, "Waste not." Every element of which our nature is composed may be said to be good in its proper place; and therefore every vicious habit springs out of the misapplication of forces which

An elevation, and a sanctity;
If new strength be not given, nor old restored,
The fault is ours, not Nature's.

might be turned to account by judicious training. The waste of sorrow is one of the most lamentable forms of waste. Sorrow too often tends to produce bitterness or effeminacy of character. But it may, if rightly used, serve only to detach us from the lower motives, and give sanctity to the higher. That is what Wordsworth sees with unequalled clearness, and he therefore sees also the condition of profiting. The mind in which the most valuable elements have been systematically strengthened by meditation, by association of deep thought with the most universal presences, by constant sympathy with the joys and sorrows of its fellows, will be prepared to convert sorrow into a medicine instead of a poison. Sorrow is deteriorating so far as it is selfish. The man who is occupied with his own interests makes grief an excuse for effeminate indulgence in self-pity. He becomes weaker and more fretful. The man who has learnt habitually to think of himself as part of a greater whole, whose conduct has been habitually directed to noble ends, is purified and strengthened by the spiritual convulsion. His disappointment, or his loss of some beloved object, makes him more anxious to fix the bases of his happiness widely and deeply, and to be content with the consciousness of honest work, instead of looking for what is called success.

But I must not take to preaching in the place of Wordsworth. The whole theory is most nobly summed up in the grand lines already noticed on the character of the Happy Warrior. There Wordsworth has explained in the most forcible and direct language the mode in which a grand character can be formed; how youthful impulses may change into manly purpose; how pain and sorrow may be transmuted into new forces; how the mind may be fixed upon lofty purposes; how the domestic affections—which give the truest happiness—may also be the greatest source of strength to the man who is

More brave for this, that he has much to lose;
and how, finally, he becomes indifferent to all petty ambition—

Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause.

This is the Happy Warrior, this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

We may now see what ethical theory underlies Wordsworth's teaching of the transformation of instinct into reason. We must start from the postulate that there is in fact a divine order in the universe; and that conformity to this order produces beauty as embodied in the external world, and is the condition of virtue as regulating our character. It is by obedience to the "stern lawgiver," Duty, that flowers gain their fragrance, and that "the most ancient heavens" preserve their freshness and strength. But this postulate does not seek for justification in abstract metaphysical reasoning. The *Intimations of Immortality* are precisely intimations, not intellectual intuitions. They are vague and emotional, not distinct and logical. They are a feeling of harmony, not a

perception of innate ideas. And, on the other hand, our instincts are not a mere chaotic mass of passions, to be gratified without considering their place and function in a certain definite scheme. They have been implanted by the Divine hand, and the harmony which we feel corresponds to a real order. To justify them we must appeal to experience, but to experience interrogated by a certain definite procedure. Acting upon the assumption that the Divine order exists, we shall come to recognise it, though we could not deduce it by an *à priori* method.

The instrument, in fact, finds itself originally tuned by its Maker, and may preserve its original condition by careful obedience to the stern teaching of life. The buoyancy common to all youthful and healthy natures then changes into a deeper and more solemn mood. The great primary emotions retain the original impulse, but increase their volume. Grief and disappointment are transmuted into tenderness, sympathy, and endurance. The reason, as it develops, regulates, without weakening, the primitive instincts. All the greatest, and therefore most common, sights of nature are indelibly associated with "admiration, hope, and love;" and all increase of knowledge and power is regarded as a means for furthering the gratification of our nobler emotions. Under the opposite treatment, the character loses its freshness, and we regard the early happiness as an illusion. The old emotions dry up at their source. Grief produces fretfulness, misanthropy, or effeminacy. Power is wasted on petty ends and frivolous excitement, and knowledge becomes barren and pedantic. In this way the postulate justifies itself by producing the noblest type of character. When the "moral being" is thus built up, its instincts become its convictions, we recognise the true voice of nature, and distinguish it from the echo of our own passions. Thus we come to know how the Divine order and the laws by which the character is harmonised are the laws of morality.

To possible objections it might be answered by Wordsworth that this mode of assuming in order to prove is the normal method of philosophy. "You must love him," as he says of the poet,

Ere to you

He will seem worthy of your love.

The doctrine corresponds to the *crede ut intelligas* of the divine; or to the philosophic theory that we must start from the knowledge already constructed within us by instincts which have not yet learnt to reason. And, finally, if a persistent reasoner should ask why—even admitting the facts—the higher type should be preferred to the lower, Wordsworth may ask, why is bodily health preferable to disease? If a man likes weak lungs and a bad digestion, reason cannot convince him of his error. The physician has done enough when he has pointed out the sanitary laws obedience to which generates strength, long life, and power of enjoyment. The moralist is in the same position when he has shown how certain habits conduce to the development of a type superior to its rivals in all the faculties which imply permanent peace of mind and power of resisting the shocks of the world without disintegration. Much

doubtless remains to be said as to the soundness of the doctrine thus expounded; but at least it corresponds to deep philosophical principle.

It only remains to be added once more that Wordsworth's poetry derives its power from the same source as his philosophy. It speaks to our strongest feelings because his speculation rests upon our deepest thoughts. His singular capacity for investing all objects with a gloss derived from early associations; his keen sympathy with natural and simple emotions; his sense of the sanctifying influences which can be extracted from sorrow, are of equal value to his power over our intellects and our imaginations. His psychology, stated systematically, is rational; and, when expressed passionately, turns into poetry. To be sensitive to the most important phenomena is the first step equally towards a poetical or a scientific exposition. To see these truly is the condition of making the poetry harmonious and the philosophy logical. And it is often difficult to say which power is most remarkable in Wordsworth. It would be easy to illustrate the truth by other than moral topics. His sonnet, noticed by De Quincey, in which he speaks of the abstracting power of darkness, and observes that as the hills pass into twilight we see the same sight as the ancient Britons, is impressive as it stands, but would be equally good as an illustration in a metaphysical treatise. Again, the sonnet beginning—

With ships the sea was sprinkled far and wide,

is at once, as he has shown in a commentary of his own, an illustration of a curious psychological law—of our tendency, that is, to introduce an arbitrary principle of order into a random collection of objects—and, for the same reason, a striking embodiment of the corresponding mood of feeling. The little poem called *Stepping Westward* is in the same way at once a delicate expression of a specific sentiment and an acute critical analysis of the subtle associations suggested by a single phrase. But such illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely. As he has himself said, there is scarcely one of his poems which does not call attention to some moral sentiment, or to a general principle or law of thought, of our intellectual constitution.

Finally, we might look at the reverse side of the picture, and endeavour to show how the narrow limits of Wordsworth's power are connected with certain moral aspects; with the want of quick sympathy which shows itself in his dramatic feebleness, and the austerity of character which caused him to lose his special gifts too early and become a rather commonplace defender of conservatism; and that curious diffidence (he assures us that it was "diffidence") which induced him to write many thousand lines of blank verse entirely about himself. But the task would be superfluous as well as ungrateful. It was his aim, he tells us, "to console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous;" and, high as was the aim, he did much towards its accomplishment.

The Rev. Adam Cameron's Visit to London.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT DREW THE MINISTER TO THE PLAYHOUSE.

THE minister was suffered at his own earnest instance to depart. He wandered about the streets aimless—he could think no more of sight-seeing. His heart had been stabbed, his brain made to reel in the very moment of his joy at the recovery of his son with Janet and their children, by the scandal and outrage inflicted on his stringent sense of right by the knowledge of their situation.

What could be done? How was he to enter the breach again and deliver them—Maidie above all from a gulph, which in his morbid, fanatical prejudice, he was tempted to regard as worse than that into which her father had fallen five-and-twenty years before?

The minister's granddaughter an actress? Maidie's namesake a painted, scantily clad, tinsel-crowned stage queen, such as Mr. Cameron had been wont, without any suspicion of austerity on his part, to liken to all that was vile. Ten thousand times rather would he have found her the humblest, hardest toiled maid-of-all-work in this great city, which in its unbroken rattle and roar of traffic that did not admit of a moment's lull to let a funeral pass by, seemed that day brutally indifferent to the welfare of her children. Sooner would he have known her lying in a coffin, and borne in the ghastly nodding hearse, which had struck him, even in the midst of his pre-occupation, as offering so jarring a contrast to the din and tumult of life around, to one of the dismal reeking churchyards of which he had read, to sleep unheeding among the nameless multitude huddled together there, instead of resting like the first Maidie at home, in her 'daisy chamber,' only friends and neighbours for fellow company, and with the green fields, the purple moors, and the waving trees for her curtains, and the blue sky for her canopy.

The fever of the minister's mind and body increased as the day wore on, until he was driven to a desperate resolution. He would enter this playhouse where his granddaughter—the young woman whom he had fancied so "discreet" in his old-fashioned phrase, so gentle, must languish and chatter, rage and bemoan herself for the idle gratification of an abandoned crew. He would snatch her from her degrading occupation, though he had to proclaim its baseness, and brave the fury of the audience, and the strong arm of the law perverted to support the authority of the theatrical manager. He would rise up, alone though he was, a poor old man of little consideration in this world of wealth,

power, and fashion, but mighty in the simple majesty of his office, and of the truth which it called upon him to utter, and cry "Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, repent lest ye perish in your sins."

The minister was not content with entertaining so frantic a project; he took steps to render it practical. He went into a chop-house and supplied the physical waste caused by his long fast and the agitation which he was enduring, with food and drink convenient for him. He fortified himself for the duty he had to do before he sent out a waiter commissioned to bring the minister all the playbills within reach. He studied them till he found in large characters which caught his eye at once, while his heart smote against his side, and he hung his head, the name of Miss Jane Mortimer. She was announced to play that night in a theatre with a title having a Greek origin. Greek and heathen associations were indeed the proper attributes of such places.

The waiter, who had been slightly impressed by his old clerical customer's taste for the drama, noticed the pause at the word which flashed out before the minister's eyes as if written in letters of fire.

"Miss Mortimer, sir! very fine hackress," observed the condescending waiter; "draws great 'ouses, and brings them down. I 'ave gone and seed her myself—quite the superior sort, that royalty, and plenty of nobs, and the press 'olds up and sets no end of store on, and as does not let her face figure in every winder. Lots of ladies and family parties are in the boxes, and a sprinkling of white chokers—I mean of your kind, sir, only younger as a rule—are in the pit when Miss Mortimer acts."

The information was a confirmation of the depravity of the age, Mr. Cameron reflected gloomily, as he set himself to wait for the hour when the particular play should be represented. He took out his old silver turnip of a watch many times. He had a respect for that watch, not only for its solid, steady-going works, but for its history. It had belonged to Mr. Cameron's father, a respected elder in the same church of which the son was a minister, and to his father's father, a godly minister, in his turn, before it had descended to Mr. Cameron. It had chronicled faithfully in its time the assemblage of many a solemn diet of public worship, and many a serious prayer-meeting, but never before—as it struck the minister with a strong recoil and spasm of shame—had it been called on to note the hour when a playhouse was to receive its votaries. To what profane uses might it not descend! To the pointing to the moment when the racecourse should swarm with cursing jockeys, lairds and lords, and their train of thieves and vagabonds; to the tolling of the bell that should announce to the callous savage mob outside the grim prison walls, that a lost wretch had gone to his account within the barrier!

Punctually at the hour mentioned in the bill—which happened to be that of "worship" in his manse at home, where in his absence his wife would be conducting the family devotions, and remembering him

faithfully in her prayer—Mr. Cameron entered a cab and drove to the theatre.

When he arrived at the building, and glanced sternly at its outer walls, he could not say that they bore any marked indication of depravity. The groups hanging about the pit door were not, even in the minister's jaundiced eyes, notably disreputable; on the contrary, the people looked many degrees more orderly than Mr. Cameron had seen natives of Kinkell, even attenders on his ministry, at the close of fair days in the neighbouring towns. The winding entrance did indeed appear like a deceitful labyrinth, and an odour of gas was full of suspicion; yet when Mr. Cameron came into the full blaze of the house, with its tasteful decorations and effective drop-scene, his simple eyes were for a moment dazzled by the splendour of the iniquity. He had to shut his eyes against what was to him the unrivalled brilliance and gaiety around him, while he shook his head in sorrowful recognition of the temptations presented to the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life—nay, to the innocent joy of youth and strength, with which sober righteousness had to cope haltingly and painfully. He could not help admitting that the dingy little parish school-room down in Kinkell, and his lectures, however carefully prepared and elaborately lightened and seasoned with quaint quips and jests adapted to the taste and comprehension of Jenny at her porridge-making, and Sandy at his harness-cleaning—even of Widow Suttie and Katie Macbryde at their stocking-darning—presented to the eye of sense a shabby substitute for this magnificent display; all the more reason that the minister should manfully resist and protest against the glamour, and fight and conquer it with those spiritual weapons which, if they were but wielded loyally, were warranted never to fail.

As the house filled, the boxes and stalls presented a show of what the minister called grand and noble company. There were many young, handsome, fashionably-dressed women and young men in evening dresses, like George Dalrymple, with even an easier, higher-bred air than Mr. George had. Mr. Cameron was prepared for the sight; for were not the great and noble, who had seldom any wholesome hard work that they knew of to do, and who had no bracing hardships to endure, for that very reason the most susceptible to the allurements of the senses? And were not the young and thoughtless of both sexes sure to flock to the chosen haunts of dissipation? But the minister was staggered and perplexed by signs of deepening and farther stretching corruption in the spectacle of many motherly-looking elderly women, whether in shawls of cashmere or plaid, in tiaras like queens or homely bonnets; and of fatherly-looking elderly men, some of them as old as himself, whether in faultless black like his own, only more correct in the cut and without any whiteness about the seams, or in rough tweeds and rougher mole-skins, and who sat composedly and unblushingly in the boxes, the pit, the galleries, and kept the young and foolish in company.

The performance of the band, with the exquisite harmony of its overture and the desperate earnestness of its conductor, was another shock to Mr. Cameron. Could such heavenly music be devoted unreservedly to the service of the devil? Were his servants as conscientious as this frowning, violently gesticulating man? Mr. Cameron thought of his precentor rising to raise the psalm-tune, with a cough and a wandering helpless look round the little kirk, where each member regarded it as his or her unquestioned privilege to take up the strain in the individual's separate key and intonation, for if the congregation sang from the heart what more was wanted?

The music stopped, the curtain rose, the minister set his teeth for the tug of war. Now were to commence those mock heroic, spuriously sentimental, vain, and vicious scenes, which apart from his granddaughter's concern in them, it pained him keenly that such a mass of reasonable beings, of men and women with souls to be saved, and those not even of the dregs of the people, but many of them, as far as he could judge, honourable and respectable in their different degrees, were gathered together to witness.

The minister stared stonily before him, his heart throbbing with something like fierceness at the idea of detecting and challenging Maidie, no longer in her modest home dress, no longer with her safe home surroundings, but in some fatally compromising guise, in some wretched mockery, of high life, falsely so called, or court life, or camp life, or life among picturesque savages.

He looked away the next moment with a mystified air in the midst of his reprieve. Maidie was not there. But it was not the gaudy glitter and glaring untruth of any theatrical scene which he saw. It was merely an eating-house, such as he had left, with its side tables and waiters. The very pair of men who began to speak in ordinary tones, were such a pair as the minister might easily have had in his company without paying particular attention to them, that evening.

Mr. Cameron, taken unawares, could not help curiously examining and admiring the life-like resemblance of the scene to that in which he had lately borne a part. He almost expected to see a copy of himself seated alone, brooding over his great grief in the distant corner.

As he listened mechanically to the two men's talk, in which there was no swagger or rant as yet, though the young countryman who took the principal share in it, was, as the minister was almost sorry to see, decidedly the worse of his town experience, flushed with drink, and with his natural carelessness converted into recklessness, Mr. Cameron grew interested in the pathetically unequal encounter of wits, between the exposed and defenceless young hopeful of some country home, and his sharp and crafty town assailant. At the moment that the honest young fool was made to pass the forged money, the minister started as if he had been stung. He detected a subtle resemblance between the unwitting forger and his own son Adam—*young Adam*, as he had looked

more than five-and-twenty years before—at the epoch when he had become intimate with the specious, unscrupulous companions who had drawn him into extravagance, and lured him into speculation to supply the heavy strain of the extravagance, and who had left him to make up his losses by the madly criminal appropriation of the funds of others—always to be replaced, and always found wanting. Then the minister's son Adam had been athletic and ruddy, frank and confiding, like this lad, and not a sickly wan and querulous invalid.

When once the impression had laid hold of the minister he could not shake it off, it took possession of him and caused him to follow with a species of desperate fascination the story that was not acted, but lived again before him. Under the power of the impression which amounted almost to a hallucination Maidie's appearance did not rouse the burning indignation which he had counted on feeling, and did not impel him to interpose, were it by violence, on her behalf. It seemed even a natural thing which he ought to take as a matter of course, that she should come into the true story happening every day, and moving the bystanders, not stage-play acted before an audience. And Maidie herself was no tawdry stage queen or mock fine lady, but such a poor girl in a ragged shawl as he might have expected to see her in the ordinary sequence of events. She was weeping bitterly for some separate trouble, till she came in contact with the man who was like her father in his youth, and who, in the manliness and generosity which balanced and in a measure redeemed his weakness, comforted and aided her.

The minister sat spell-bound. He did not interfere to prevent Maidie's presence there, did not proclaim their several identities and claim her as his granddaughter, while he denounced her employers and patrons as he had purposed to denounce them.

Everything was so unlike what he had anticipated. This was not acting, it was reality down to the policeman lurking in the background, and coming home to his own experience in a startling coincidence and with an irresistible power. He was disarmed, overcome. He, who in his austerity had not only condemned but despised all histrionic gifts, of which he had been profoundly ignorant, followed, with more intense interest than that felt by the most inveterate playgoer present, the course of the narrative. He watched the arrest of the inadvertent forger and his trial, with shuddering appreciation. The minister went with the culprit to prison and came out with him, bearing his terrible brand to the light of day, which shone with a difference from its old radiance. The minister entered with breathless sympathy on the fallen man's desperate struggles to regain an honest livelihood, and sank back with him time after time baffled and baulked, taunted and rejected by the lowest and vilest on every side, till the once over-flowing milk of human kindness in the man's breast turned to gall, and the outcast stood in sore danger of becoming the brute and devil he was so freely believed to be.

The minister had only one comfort as he sat there, white and shaking with emotion, craning his gaunt neck to see all that was happening of such vital moment to him, his neckerchief hanging limp, his grey hair dishevelled, his eyes glistening, his bony hands clasped tightly on his knees; it was the faithful woman with the look of Maidie, who clung to the sinner, and strove to save him, who as Janet could not, but as instinct told Mr. Cameron Maidie might have done, played the part of guardian angel, and entered the breach once and again to deliver the man, body and soul, from the clutch of the destroyer.

Once in the interval between two of the acts, when the crash of music broke the stillness, the minister apprehended where he was, and that he was beholding a shadow, not a reality, a living speaking picture combined with matchless skill, and no actual version of his son's fortunes. He tried to rouse himself to look around. The company were quiet and subdued as ever he had seen his congregation after one of his most earnest sermons. Some of the women showed traces of having been crying softly, even men's eyes were moist, while other men hung their heads, or set their faces sternly, as men will set them at crying injustice and cruel persecution. The next moment the minister was recalled to the tragedy occurring before him, and when somebody sitting near him, at leisure to observe his rapt interest in the business of the stage, courteously offered him an opera-glass, the poor minister was guilty of thrusting it aside without any expression of gratitude, as an impertinent interruption.

It was with a heartfelt sigh of relief and the sense of a great burden lifted off him that the minister shared in the gradual clearing up of the cloud and the deliverance of the victim of excess and fraud.

Before Mr. Cameron could ask himself what it all meant—why he had broken his resolution and failed in his purpose, why, in place of having had to writhe under a sense of outraged morality, he should feel as if he and all around him had received a lesson in virtue as impressive as it was salutary—the minister found himself suddenly discovered and surrounded by friends. There was George Dalrymple, come round from a critic's point of vantage to congratulate the minister warmly yet delicately on the independent, liberal step he had taken; there was the minister's son, as he was to-day in his invalid wraps, with his daughter-in-law in her matronly bravery, from the stage-box put at their disposal, reproaching and thanking him in a breath. Why he had not come to the box to which he had the best right, where he would have been so much more comfortable, and as private as he could have chosen? How good and kind of him it was to come after all—Maidie would be so pleased and proud. And did he not think that Maidie acted well? Could anything have been truer or more tender than her representation? But he should see her in other and more important characters, in which she was quite as good. The Press allowed it universally; her enemies—well, yes, alas! an actress, however innocent and high-minded, perhaps

just because of her innocence and high-mindedness, always had her enemies—could not deny it.

The minister paid no heed to, could not, indeed, take in their assertions. He had thought of no liberal step, but of a dire necessity, when he entered the theatre. He did not care for, he was altogether above base distinction and privacy of a stage box. He had seen no acting that he would call acting; he had witnessed the living similitude of one of the many dangers and wrongs befalling humanity on every side of him.

There was one thing in which Mr. Cameron stubbornly opposed the advice of all his friends. He would not quit the theatre, now that the play in which Maidie had borne her part was over. He would sit out and judge, as far as his thrilled nerves, confused senses, and shifting conclusions would let him, the remainder of the entertainment.

Mr. Cameron did as he wished, and he heard and saw much that carried him back to his old estimate and threatened to reverse the late revolution in his opinions. Here, in very truth, were the silly conceits, the gross burlesques, the foolish talking and jesting which were not convenient, the forced laughter like the crackling of thorns, which Mr. Cameron had classed with the loftily poetic but often impious heathen tragedies of his college reading—the one representing the tinsel, the other the sheet-tin thunder, which he had taken to be the characteristic properties of the stage. The minister was revolted at last; was driven to blush—the faint but significant blush of age—for those who knew no blushes for themselves, though he had given up all idea of a public protest against the licentiousness.

But through all the later offence there was left the rooted impression of what had gone before it: the hushed, affected assembly, the tale told it, with wonderful effect, of error and of repentance struggling to redeem its lost inheritance, well nigh in vain; of strength vouchsafed in the end, and constancy reaping its final reward; and of the perishing sinner even in his bitter despair caused to come triumphant out of the crowning trial of his integrity.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MINISTER'S CONFESSION TO HIS PEOPLE.

THE minister was like a man in a stupor—rather in a dream—after the night at the theatre. He took no further interest in the object of his holiday. He refused to go back to the playhouse to witness any more of Maidie's creations, though he was very gentle with his granddaughter; did not utter another remonstrance against her calling, even said to her on one occasion, "Maidie, this is a world full of great and grievous contradictions; but as for your part in our dispute, it is right I should tell you that you have triumphed."

He lost strength and appetite; he pined to return home, with his holiday but half spent and his commissions not half executed. He would not listen to his daughter-in-law's mysterious hints that there might be a great event impending for which his presence in London, and at the little house in Westminster, would be incumbent.

One fine morning he announced briefly that he should set off for home that very night; and though his natural temper presented an alternation of mildness after generous heat—the heat being for public grievances, the mildness for private wear and tear—so that what his maid servant said of him was fully endorsed by the general conviction of his people, “the minister was like a lamb in his ain manse”—he would not in this instance be turned from his intention.

For that matter, the minister's nearest relations, and George Dalrymple, who put himself forward and displayed the liveliest concern in Mr. Cameron's welfare, hesitated to detain him, fearing that some constitutional crisis dangerous for a man of his years was at hand, that the first symptoms of serious illness, which might be averted, or at least subdued, if he only reached home and returned to his old routine in time, were showing themselves unmistakably.

Thus the minister was escorted to one of the northern stations by a consenting anxious company, had his third-class ticket changed for a first, while he was passive in his friends' hands, and was seated in the most desirable corner, with Janet fussing about him and Maidie standing silent with her hand on the carriage window, while George Dalrymple was coolly tipping the guard before the minister's unheeding eyes. At the last moment the minister's son pushed aside Maidie and stepped into the carriage, beseeching his father in an undertone, “Will you not let me go down with you, sir? I am quite equal to it; it would do me good, I daresay, and I should see my mother.”

But the minister waved him off gently. “Not yet, Adam—not yet, my man; your mother must be prepared. There are many things which must be seen to first.”

The minister took his manse by surprise when he walked slowly and heavily in, unannounced, the following afternoon. But he could not come too soon; and the fact of his return a few days earlier than had been expected struck the simple souls as a flattering proof of what required no proof, namely, how true the minister's heart was to his country home and his work, how soon he had tired of any recreation which left them out of count.

Even Mrs. Cameron was inclined to regard her husband's fagged, haggard looks, and the pre-occupied troubled air visible in the middle of his expression of heartfelt satisfaction to be at home again, which might seem to quench the hopes of restored life and spirit that had been founded on his holiday, as the effects of his fatiguing journey, which would pass away and leave the good consequences to come to light in due time.

But before the minister could have recovered from his exhaustion—

before he had made his first public reappearance in his pulpit in order that he might return thanks there, in the name of himself and his people, for his happy home-coming, as was fitting—he announced his intention of summoning a meeting of the congregation in the borrowed school-room. “I have something to tell them,” he said, “and I cannot wait till the Sabbath day be past; it must be said before I mount the pulpit again, if ever I mount it. No, Marget, I’m not ailing; at least I’m not more out of sorts than might be looked for. I have no cause to hope that my Master is about to call me to that better world, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”

“But where is the hurry, Adam?” urged Mrs. Cameron with a little discontent. She was not accustomed to find herself a cipher in making such an arrangement. Yet all the while she had a distinct perception of that rare something in the minister’s eye, which, whenever it had looked out upon her, she had never ventured to contradict. “Some of the head folk are from home. The Crichtons have gone a jaunt to the Highlands. The Cairns have taken the bairns to the seaside. They seized the opportunity of your absence, for although the probationer lad did well enough, and I am willing to believe he has the root of the matter in him, still he is young and is something of a college stick still in the delivery, he is far from like you. I can tell you I had a fell fight to keep the attendance at the prayer meeting up to the mark, not to humble us in the eyes of the other kirks and the world. Could you not be satisfied with giving me your cracks, Adam? I have heard none of your stories save what you wrote the first week,” suggested the wife a little reproachfully.

“I should prefer to speak out to the whole parish at once,” said the minister, with a feverish excitement upon him: “but I have something for your ear, Marget, that will make you not mind hearing anything more. I have seen our son Adam in London. He is broken in health, but is likely enough to live out his days as well as ours, and he has many solaces. Janet is with him, he has a daughter Maidie, grown to woman’s estate, and a little lad and lass besides. Their circumstances are more than comfortable as far as the world is concerned. I cannot tell you more, woman, now, but you’ll wait for the rest.”

Yes, she could wait. She had not even listened to all the few particulars he had given. Her son, her only son Adam, alive in London, and not in misery, seen by his father, and to be seen by her before her eyes closed on this world! That was enough for her, enough to take to her heart and brood over, praise God for, and grow younger upon, for a day and a night and another day, without asking questions or pressing the minister for fresh enlightenment.

Mrs. Cameron ceased to be surprised that the minister should look engrossed and harassed and had forgotten his commissions. When his people heard, they would make allowance, as they had done ere now; and the omission admitted of rectification with Adam in London. What

did it matter now though the minister either shut himself up in his room or spent the greater part of the intervening time in pacing backwards and forwards in the garden, failing to remark the roses which he was wont to care so much for, or to pluck the woodruffe planted beside the garden seat ready to be plucked and crushed in the hand and smelt for refreshment, or to take advantage at sunset and moontide of the fine view which his wife had been hitherto tempted to think he made only too much of. He went beyond his garden bounds for none save the shortest walks, and these were directed where he might, as far as possible, see nobody till the meeting in the school-house was over. The walks were repeatedly turned towards the parish kirk—standing with its spire in the centre of the kirkyard, and which was common to all denominations—to that corner of it where he had laid to rest the fair young body of the daughter who had been so dear to both father and mother.

But after his single explanation, Mrs. Cameron was not surprised or apprehensive because of anything the minister said or did, till the Saturday night of the meeting.

The fact was, that the minister's tender conscience was not only racked with difficulties, he felt that in the light of the views which he and his people had till now held together uncompromisingly, he had violated and abused the confidence and kindness lavished upon him. He must lay the affair before his people and hear their decision—of which he could form no previous conception. Not only he could not say what he would have done in their place, he could not even make up his mind what he would have them do. For it was no light matter for a clergyman of his persuasion to create the scandal not merely of having entered a playhouse and sat out the entertainment there without having borne a crushing testimony to its wickedness, but of possessing a granddaughter an actress on the stage, which he could not command her to abandon, on the pain of his for ever disowning her.

He had only arrived at one conclusion. If his people showed the slightest disposition to exact the sacrifice, he should resign his charge, even lay down his licence as a minister and preacher of the Word on the spot, and go away into obscurity, an old man well spent in the service of his Master and brethren, to earn his own and his wife's living as he best could. It would break his wife's heart as well as his own, but what then? It was the course of conduct which his people—between whom and him there had formerly reigned such a proud and happy unanimity of opinion—had a right to expect. It was his simple duty, and when that was said there was literally nothing more left—where the minister was concerned, to be said or done.

While this pent-up storm was raging in the minister's breast, his people, summoned by the exertions of the beadle, were thrown into an agreeable flutter by the news of their minister's return. Like his wife, they took it as a well-chosen compliment that he should have cut short his holiday and hastened back to them, even while they pretended to cry

"Houts! what's the auld man seeking hame so sune? Couldna he have gane the length of his tether? Did he think we couldna do wanting him? We're no just so dependent upon instruments. We could have tholed another thin discoorse from the young birkie. But the minister, honest man, is welcome hame, and certainly it was considerate, handsome and like himsell not to grip at the last day and hour of his holiday, which is mair than can be said of what the doctor and the ither ane did at the end of their terms of absence, when they took, as we are creditably informed, an additional Sabbath and sax days forby to their bargain. Moreover, it is very hearty of the minister to ca' us a' thegither at aince, to get the gude of his travels and hear his tales when they are fresh, and how he found the truth of the gude auld Scots proverb—

See's east, seek west,
Hame's best."

The country folk could not make up their minds, while they allowed their fancy full play, what might be the minister's first subject on which he should expatiate to their itching ears. Would it be the thronged streets, or the grand palaces, or the wonderful Exhibition, with its treasures, at once? Would it be that he had stood and looked his fill, in peaceful gardens, at wild beasts such as Paul had fought with at Ephesus? Or that he had met the Queen in her coach taking an airing and lifted his hat to her, while she might well have done more than nod back to him in return, since everybody knew that she had a "fell wark" with Scotland, and was not "bigottet" like her royal ancestors to black prelacy, but lent a blink of the royal countenance to Presbyterianism—granted that it was only the "cauld, wersh" Presbyterianism of the Establishment—the worse for her Gracious Majesty? Or would the minister judge it more becoming and improving after all to give them his first lecture on what he had witnessed of the formality of the Prayer-Book, and the mummery of the surplice—to which the Geneva gown was a light offence—or on the Popish snare of the organ, such as their godly "forbears" had resisted to blood?

In this determinedly complacent mood, any whisper that the minister was looking ill and seeming hardly himself—instead of greatly improved by his jaunt, was met by the smiling assurance that it showed how the minister's heart was in his parish when no place agreed with him like Kinkell. Luckily the season was approaching the lull before harvest, when everybody was at liberty to attend the lecture. The weather was fine and the daylight long for such a walk as the minister proposed to many members of his congregation. Master and mistress, man and maid, flocked to the intellectual treat which they had earned for themselves. There was Mrs. Cairns, come home days sooner from her seaside lodgings, for the purpose, wearing her stiff poplin and her bonnet—the flowers in which emulated the weediest of her husband's fields, since the female descendants of the Covenanters are no quakers in dress, but take out in

it compensation for the severity of their tenets generally. Mr. Cairns bore her company, with his face several shades nearer mahogany colour than the minister's when he started for London, yet he had crowned his grizzled head with a white hat in utter defiance of the state of his complexion. There was Saunders, uplifted like his master with the certainty of a favourable season, and feeling indued with a double strength to undergo his customary toil and have a little power left in him to clean himself and walk to the schoolroom to hear the minister describe that great London, which was as far removed from Saunders as was ancient Babylon, without falling into a dead sleep of sheer exhaustion. There were Jenny and Sandy—Jenny actually in a coquettish round hat, replacing her grandmother's mutch, and Sandy in a smart Glengarry, they who had contributed in their turn to the minister's stock purse, and had still not got over the dignity of the deed, but were loth to keep in the background and appear as if they had not had a hand in their minister's holiday—while to them all life, with its hard work ready provided for them, was still a holiday, and the coming harvest only "a fine ploy." And there were widow Suttie and Katie Macbryde in their check aprons and little shawls, and who were always at liberty with the piteous liberty of aged and lone women. All were congregated full of interest and elation to listen to the minister's story, and by no means without the inspiring consciousness that they formed collectively a spectacle to win the admiration and rouse the envy of every other congregation in Kinkell and in broad Scotland. The scene was that dingy little schoolroom—place of many tasks and ink daubs, and to which Mr. Cameron had turned with fond regretful comparison in the middle of the gorgeousness and brilliance of the London theatre.

It was only when the minister entered the packed space, and without a particular greeting, looking as if he saw nobody, with a white face and dim eyes, walked up to the schoolmaster's desk, and after the announcement common to all kinds of congregational meetings, that he should open the proceedings with prayer, began to pray with all his soul for strength, for pardon, and grace to be vouchsafed to him on that special occasion, that an electric thrill of comprehension passed through the people. Something was wrong, the minister had met with some fresh, heavy trial, in place of having had the refreshment that had been provided for him. He had been robbed. He had been threatened with deadly sickness. Some awful calamity was about to befall the dissenting Kirk of Scotland. Only Mrs. Cameron, only the person who was nearest to the minister, remained in the engrossment of her secret, stolidly impervious to the common impression.

Almost at the moment when this enlightenment passed over the assembly, when each man and woman dropped simultaneously his or her "crouseiness" and "cantiness," and stared in blank dismay at the minister and at each other, farther progress was stayed by an unlooked-for intruder.

Though the schoolroom was only granted to the congregation by favour, seeing that it belonged by law to the Established Church, and by public opinion to the whole community, in courtesy it had been entirely given up this evening to the requirements of Mr. Cameron's people. No doubt these had in the ignorance and innocence of their hearts rather coveted public notice, and gone so far as to invite strangers to their body members of other kirks to share in the instruction and entertainment so gratefully and gracefully provided by Mr. Cameron, and to contemplate the beneficial sight of the people's perfect harmony and devotion to the minister of their choice. But the members of other kirks, who were mostly of a mind to look down upon the homely anniversaries and soirées of the humbler dissenters with lofty disdain, or at best with condescending tolerance, and who were at the same time not incapable of being piqued by the manifestation, considering also the limited accommodation of the schoolroom, had almost to a man resisted the challenges and invitations of their religious rivals, and declined to be present. The very master of the place—that rural magnate in his own person had not put in an appearance.

To this absenteeism of the representatives of Church establishment and of remaining schism there proved to be, however, a very notable exception. Just as Mr. Cameron concluded his prayer, Dr. Dalrymple himself, portly and bluff, with the little bustle and sensation inevitable in the circumstances, was seen to walk into the school-room, to advance to the desk, and having exchanged a few words with Mr. Cameron, to take his seat beneath the rostrum, where the reverent doctor subsided, grasping his stick with both hands, while his chin rested upon his hands.

The words which had passed between the two clergymen, and been heard only by themselves, were these :

"Good-evening, sir. I was on my way to your manse, to confer with you on a matter with which we both have to do, when I bethought myself of seeking you here. Have I your permission to make one of your audience till you are at liberty to speak with me?"

"Surely, Dr. Dalrymple," said the minister, as if he would have added, "this is your school-room, which the law has given you, and which you can enter at any time. It is granted to us only by your grace; you need not ask my permission to do what, however little I may like it, I cannot possibly prevent." Then the more generous nature of the man prevailed, and he spoke aloud : "You do us an honour, sir; but I shall not detain you long—I shall be sooner at leisure than you may suppose."

Had the meeting preserved its original character—had there not risen up in it a skeleton, only dimly perceived as yet, but without question waiting to be revealed in its native ghastliness—the unaccounted-for presence of Doctor Dalrymple would have been hailed as the crowning triumph of the night. As it was, each member fidgeted

uneasily and bemoaned beneath his or her breath the untoward accident which had brought an arch enemy to be a witness of their discomfiture ; though it is necessary to confess that Doctor Dalrymple, the leader of Erastianism, or what was judged such in Kinkell, in his portliness and bluntness, was more modest in his claims and far more inclined to show a friendly spirit to the dissenters than many of the lairds and ladies, substantial farmers, and retired professional men and their wives, who formed the bulk of his parishioners. Even Mr. Cameron had a thought to spare for the new element in his tribulation. It was hard that his old opponent, Geordie Da'rymple's father, whom Mr. Cameron had so lately pitied, and in his condescending pity half condemned for having a son—his most promising and favourite son—a playgoer, and a heady, hardened defender of playgoing, should come to the school-house to-night to hear what the minister had to tell his people. But what did it matter ? By to-morrow morning the whole tale—loyal and standing shoulder to shoulder as the dissenters of Kinkell had ever shown themselves—would be all over the parish. It was too extraordinary a scandal for the scene and circumstances, too full of startling vicissitude, contradiction, and recantation to be kept secret by any mortal congregation.

Mr. Cameron began as he had always intended to do, by thanking his people once more for their recent act of liberality and kindness to him ; but the thanks, in their very sincerity, sounded sad and with a certain accent of humble deprecation which went with pain to many hearts. Why should the minister speak so, as if he were not worthy of the utmost expression of their regard ? It brought a lump into several throats there to hear him.

Then he passed suddenly to the substance of the statement which he had made to his wife. His people were entitled to learn that in London an event never reckoned upon had come to pass in his history. He had found there a long-lost son—that son whom many of his elder hearers must remember, whose backsliding and downfall—he his father must speak of them once again—had been the great calamity of his own and his wife's life, ten times heavier than the removal from earth to heaven of their young daughter.

At the reference to the younger Adam Cameron, a little rustle of mingled relief and sympathy, of indignation tempered by a certain satisfaction in their own discernment, passed over the elder members of the congregation. It was no new unheard of misfortune after all, it was only the revival of an old grievance. Yes, they had known from the first moment the minister's altered look and tone had come home to them that young Adam Cameron, the foolish scamp, was at the bottom of his poor father's distress. Here was the key-note to the whole doleful measure that was to be performed for their edification, but certainly neither for their congratulation nor their enlivenment. Was the minister impelled to point a moral by holding up the wretched fate of his son as a beacon-light to all careless offenders ? Was not this more

than was called for from any father, even though he were a devoted minister of a pure Kirk? The Kinkell dissenters had, with few exceptions, never heard of the old Roman Consul who sat in condemnation on his sons, as traitors to the state; but if they had, their human hearts, descendants of old Scotch Covenanters though they boasted themselves, would have recoiled from the stern patriotism, since they were prompted to doubt the same obligation in their minister in reference to a higher state and a loftier allegiance. But the minister did not go on to lacerate his own heart and pain the sensibilities of his hearers by exposing the errors with their punishment, and by denouncing the career of his son. He was not even, as some were fain to hope, bringing back to the kirk in which young Adam had once sat a promising member, admitted to the most sacred privileges by his father's own hand, the membership in which he had heinously forfeited, tidings of the sinner's repentance.

The minister was proceeding to recount, a little to the bewilderment of his audience, that he had found his son with his wife and family maintained by the filial duty and industry of a daughter.

It was well that the minister should have some small comfort in his relations with his son at last, only why did he not take the comfort more heartily, his hearers were asking themselves? She must be a clever, capable lass, and a good manager like her grandmother, this daughter of young Adam's. "Sirs! to think the scapegrace—and he had not been without his winning qualities, as they could recall, poor sorrow*—had a daughter that length. She was not altogether a hawk out of an ill nest either, when she had the minister and Mrs. Cameron, as well as her reckless father and silly mother, for her progenitors."

This Maidie Cameron—yes, she too was a Maidie—continued the minister, like that other who had been dear and sacred in her simplicity, weakness, and goodness, to every living soul who had ever had anything to do with her—was, he was fully convinced, he told them thankfully and solemnly, a virtuous young woman, even one of those daughters of whom it is written in every generation, "this excelleth them all." But he must also tell them that she was a play-actress.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RECEPTION OF THE CONFESSION AND ITS INTERRUPTION.

AT the anti-climax of the announcement, a great stir, a perfect "sough" of consternation and reprobation shook the assembly—down to Widow Suttie and Katie Macbryde. Each man and woman shrank back, and figuratively drew in his or her garments.

Mrs. Cameron started up for a moment to her feet, and looked with

* "Sorrow," a pathetic Scotch classification for sinner.

strong appeal in the faces around her. Her keen gaze protested, "Much travel and the restoration of our son have made him mad. Don't you see it? It is very sad, but not bad as he would have you believe."

The minister did not stop to remark on the effect which he had produced, but hurried on, always with greater excitement and agitation, rising up on his tip-toes and descending again with an emphatic impetus, groaning out every point in his narrative. "Yes, Marget, yes, my friends, it is too true, a play-actress, yet no painted Jezebel, but a modest woman. I saw and heard her in her calling. I went into a play-house, I need not say for the first time in my life. I meant to have cried out to both play-actors and play-goers, 'Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' I meant to have summoned and adjured them to turn from the evil of their ways, in the name and by the example of the great cloud of witnesses who have come out from the world and preferred to bear their reproach rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. I would have done it, although I was but a single man against a multitude, and what they would have considered a poor simple fanatical old country parson, against the rank, wealth and wit of London. But I could not, for my tongue was tied. It was not because I thought of the passage of Scripture that speaks of saying 'Corban—a gift,' and suffering the child to do no more for the father, though that has come into my mind since I came home. It was because of what I saw and heard. There was no encouragement there to high heads, light looks and vain imaginations, to excess, riot and profligacy. There was nothing save a terribly true representation of a young fool's folly, and a simple man's fall, of the snares of the wicked cunningly set, of the foot of the unwary caught in the toils, and the man thrown down, in the flower of his strength and comeliness, left like him who fell of old among the thieves between Jerusalem and Jericho, naked and wounded and nigh to death, with never a Samaritan to take him up and bind his wounds pouring in oil and wine, putting him on his own beast, and carrying him to the inn. Nay, there was a Samaritan, my brethren, in the guise of a fond good woman, who stuck to the poor mad fellow when his luck was down, as he would have said, and his back was at the wall; when not only every other friend had deserted him, but the traitor had done his part, and the victim was misjudged and cast off on every hand. You and I have seen and perhaps known such women, even in this quiet country place, where, although the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked all the world over, there are rarely, thank God, the great temptations, the deep falls, and the horrible cruelties of the crowded cities. And have we not wished such a woman well, as we looked on at her noble, faithful search, and rejoiced with her when she found, under God, the human soul that was lost? It was even thus that the play-goers—whom we have been in the habit of regarding even as the ancient Pharisee looked on the Publican—watched the woman, who played her part so well that it was plain it was second nature to her, and learnt a

double lesson of Christian self-control and Christian charity. The end of the whole matter, my friends, is that it has become clear to me, incredible as it may sound to you—and, indeed, it grieves me to the heart to recognise that we who understood each other so well before, may fail to understand each other now—that the theatre so decried and abused by the very salt of the earth—I do not deny it—so debased by the base uses of merest frivolity and yet viler ends to which it has been put, is still capable of teaching such lessons as I have described, and nobler lessons than these, lessons of purest patriotism and holiest martyrdom. Why, where has been our logic as well as our faith to doubt it, when we have long ceased to withhold from the greatest plays, from *Lear*, *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, the highest praise of reverent morality equal to their art—not the ticketed, stereotyped morality of narrow sects—but something a little nearer to the spirit of the Bible itself, which is broad as human nature, while it is high as the Divine? Again, is it a fit argument to employ against the stage and theatrical representations that all experience is against them, that they have been grossly misapplied and shamefully degraded? Nay, my brethren, the same argument can be used against any institution, against the Christian Church itself when the baneful influence of much priestcraft, the unworthy walk of many professors, the corruption that still prevails in the Christian world, may be and has been quoted quite as conclusively in the same line of reasoning. But is not your answer in the cause of Christianity ready? Abuse is no evidence against the fitness of use; the higher the standard the harder the struggle, even though the Lord is on our side, to live up to it, the more conspicuous the flaws in the men and women who have adopted it as their test and aim. The more precious the thing, whether noble faculty, like that of speech, or lofty institution, like that of a Christian Church, the greater and the more certain the danger it runs, where a fallen and degenerate race are concerned, of tremendous abuse and huge misappropriation.

“And so I could not revile the calling of my granddaughter, or drag her from the stage, or do anything, it seems to me, save this that I am doing—namely, come back to you and tell you of the trial that has befallen me, and how it has opened my eyes, as I judge, on this particular point; if I am no longer sound in social views, according to the estimation of our Kirk, at least I am still a true man before God, which you will grant is of infinitely greater moment.

“In conclusion, I leave the matter in your hands, with that of the session, to deal with it and to report it to the presbytery, or to confer with myself, as you think fit. I shall abide by your decision, even to the loosing of that bond between us which I had thought only death would sever, even to the laying down of my office, if my brethren should deem it expedient, and stepping back to the ranks of laymen. I am an old man—older than in years; I could not at the best have done God and you much more service, so it matters less.

"Another word: I crave your forbearance for having come before you to-night with so different an intimation from that which I heartily grant you had every title to expect, and which in other circumstances I should have been only too proud and happy to give you. I know that this must strike you as a poor return for your generosity, and I can only beg of you to forgive me for this among my many other shortcomings."

The minister sat down amidst a hardly smothered groan. If he had not been, as his wife implied, driven mad, in the teeth of all their sanguine calculations, by his travels, then a great and grievous calamity had indeed overtaken him and them. The blandishments of the world, especially as represented in the person of his granddaughter, the child of a reprobate son, had been too much for the steadfastness of the minister's faith and the integrity of his creed. He had yielded to overwhelming temptation, had touched pitch and become hopelessly defiled, had fallen from his high estate of rigid propriety and unswerving orthodoxy, and come back to confess his fall to his people and throw himself on their mercy, broken as he was in reputation and in the trust which he had once inspired, labouring as he did under the unspeakable misfortune for a clergyman, of a man who is no longer at one with his creed and his brethren, but who has been forced to think and judge for himself in a difference which is irreconcilable.

It was not to be supposed that Mr. Cameron's people, much as they were attached to him, could lay down at a word the prejudices of a lifetime—nay, more, the prejudices of generations of covenanting and dissenting forefathers whom their descendants revered to the full as highly as the devout Roman Catholics their Fathers or the strict Jews their Elders. It would not have been much to the credit of Mr. Cameron's teaching or of the intelligence of his scholars if this impossibility had been possible; even if there had not been in the Scotch national character that strong polemical bias which will induce a beggar to argue for his especial dogma as stoutly as he will fight for his dish.

The first result in the meeting, which had baulked every expectation and dashed every high hope, was great consternation and sincere mourning amidst rising wrath at the backsliding of the minister.

"Oh! the fair twa-faced cutty," Katie Macbryde almost audibly apostrophized the absent Maidie, hanging her own old shaking head and wiping the bleared withered eyes in which tears were well nigh dried up, "to have so beguiled her ain worthy grandfather. Wae worth the day he ever gaed, or we ever sent him to that weary Lon'on. But eh! he who ought to have been a pillar o' the truth—I'm sure we a' thoct him sae—suld have stood mair siccar. What can be looked for from puir auld bodies, when mighty men are taken captive like Samson?"

Katie's sentiments were very much those of the majority present, and perhaps they were all that could be looked for from any merely human assembly. The minister made no motion to dissolve it. He did not

ask those who might have begun to reckon his heart and hands unclean to join with him again in prayer. He was suffering the meeting to dissolve itself in repressed tumult and passion, when Dr. Dalrymple, whose presence in the hostile camp had actually been forgotten in the civil war which had broken forth between leader and army, but who had been an exceedingly attentive and interested listener to the minister's confession, rose and arrested the retreating members by proceeding to address them.

Here was another bombshell thrown in their midst, for this was a case where no Dr. Dalrymple, of the Established Kirk, had any call to put in his word, though unquestionably the field of the contest happened to be his school-house.

But it was not on his right to stand there and speak of the respect due to dignities, and the evil of schism, that the doctor was about to farther startle and dumfound his audience.

"My friends," he said quietly, though he could not shake off the habit and tone of authority, "I came here this night, waiting to speak to your minister, my respected Christian brother, in private, of a matter between us which, now that I have heard what he has said, I have come to the conclusion, extraordinary as it may sound, had better be spoken of publicly. I have had a letter from my son George this very night, telling me of his marriage. We have it in Scripture that a man will leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and we must make up our minds to the ordinance of God and nature, little as we parents may like it sometimes. My son, who has been a good son to me till this time, will marry in a few days that very young lady whom her grandfather has just described to you as so dutiful a daughter, so virtuous a woman—and a play-actress. I have not been bred up in your abhorrence to the stage. I have known and esteemed, I am not ashamed to say it, actors and actresses, in my day, though I have not gone to see a play since I became a clergyman. At the same time I do not pretend to have courted such a connection in itself." (If Doctor Dalrymple had felt bound to disclose what was passing in his manse at that moment, he would have had to admit that it was full of lamentation and that wife and daughters were bewailing in consort the favourite son and brother's infatuated self-sacrifice.) "I can only make the best of it, since I am well assured that my son George would no more be turned from what is in his mind by me, even if I were inclined to interfere, than I should have been turned from a lawful choice, being come to man's estate, by my father in his generation. The most satisfactory point after the one requisite is that the connection will serve to ally me with an honourable foe; one of whose worth, in his life-long labours as a fellow-worker with me in this parish, I am well qualified to judge. But that is not why I have risen here to-night, and made you prematurely acquainted with a chapter of my domestic history—an impertinent liberty as you may well think it. I ask to be permitted to endorse fully the opinion which Mr.

Cameron has allowed himself to express, guardedly, of his granddaughter, my future daughter-in-law. I believe her to be a noble young woman, and an ornament to the stage, from which, however, my son will in a great measure withdraw her."

It may seem invidious to record the effect which Dr. Dalrymple's speech had on the congregation; but dawning comfort sprung up and grew in the members' minds from the bare knowledge that Dr. Dalrymple was in the same boat with their minister, that the Established Kirk could not cry fie on the dissenters, in fact, that the stigma was in the very course of being transferred from the last to the first by the author of all the mischief being summarily transformed, like any less exceptional woman, from Maidie Cameron into Mrs. George Dalrymple. Anyhow, and henceforth, the offender would bear her husband's name, and his people and his kirk must take upon them the chief brunt of her offences.

The shock of the catastrophe was broken by its division and dispersion over a double area. The dissenters, though they would according to their own notions have scorned to take a lesson from their Erastian brethren, were ultimately led by the equanimity with which the latter took the tidings of Dr. Dalrymple's son's *mésalliance* to look over the strange fact in these degenerate days, that their own minister had a granddaughter who had gone on the stage, and that he had not only looked on her degradation, but had come forward and defended the enormity. The dissenting presbytery was at least as wise as the laity, and agreed that it was best to pass over the breach of discipline. The minister went out and in among his people as of old, on sufferance at first, but ere long on much of the old fashion of mutual confidence and affection. Nay, there were not wanting those of his hearers who declared that the minister had, after all, drawn inspiration from his visit to London, and though he no longer fought the battles of dissent as hotly as in his raw youth (for that matter was he not called now, in common courtesy, to toleration, seeing that he had Dr. Dalrymple's son for his grandson-in-law?), yet in enlargement of heart and in a fresh spring of hopefulness mingling with his tenderness, he was the better for his holiday.

Mrs. Cameron was certainly the better though she had never quitted the precincts of the manse. The woman was inexpressibly softened by the knowledge that her son was alive and not in misery, even before he ventured down to Kinkell and she held his hand and looked in his face once more. It rendered her gentler and more pitiful to those who diverged in the slightest degree from her rigid code, that she was conscious of what was, nevertheless, a sharp humiliation to her, that her son's daughter was an actress. Mrs. Cameron, with the rest of her husband's parishioners, had to submit to the fact that Maidie Dalrymple did not altogether desert the stage, of which she in her experience, as well as her grandfather in his ignorance, had formed a glorious conception. She would appear once and again as circumstances justified, on the scene of her old labours and triumphs. But she was no longer Maidie

Cameron : she was Maidie Dalrymple, and her deeds were in a great measure her husband's and his people's concern.

When Maidie came down to Kinkell with her husband, she had to encounter an ordeal of jealous suspicion, even from some of those whom she desired should be near and dear to her. But she was well supported in her nearest relation, and she was a creature of singular breadth and magnanimity, and some intrepidity for a woman. She surmounted the ordeal successfully, and although she was still regarded with a sort of fearful curiosity and grim doubt by those natives of Kinkell at a distance from her, she won her way gradually until she stood high in the good graces of both manses. She vindicated the minister's sagacity by being in the end, after lengthened trial, approved of by Mrs. Cameron as Maidie's own mother had never been valued. She was the dear child, the second Maidie, altogether different from the first, and yet with her own fine endowments, to the minister. In addition it was whispered that, even with daughters of his own who came round to his side at last and received Maidie as a wiser brighter sister, she was Dr. Dalrymple's favourite daughter.

The minister's visions during the first half hour spent in the little house at Westminster were more than fulfilled. The close kindly network of family ties which he had once judged irretrievably rent, was reunited and stretched in an armour of defence and a chamber of delight around and about him and his aged wife. Young faces and footsteps, among which George Dalrymple's were not the least welcome, with clapping, clapping baby hands, lent the last lingering gladness and tender touches to the quiet old manse.

Merbaunee.

BY WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.



LONG the level sands I
 heard
 The mystic water, how it
 stirr'd
 And whisper'd of the days
 of old;
 While Sun touch'd ocean,
 sank,—and soon
 Eastwards a tawny va-
 porous Moon
 Rose ghostlike, to that
 solemn tune
 Of waves. A path of
 ruddy gold,
 Of yellow gold, in turn
 unroll'd
 Full to my feet. Without
 a word,
 I heard an ancient story
 told.

A Princess of the Sea, a Prince
 Of the West Isle,—and never since
 Was any fairer couple wed
 Or loved each other more. As fled
 Month after month, year after year,
 Their love grew every day more dear,
 Glad, sad, together, or apart;
 Tender they were, and true of heart.

Askest what love is? Hast thou known
 That sweet religion? from thy own
 Learn all true lovers' creed; there is
 No other way to learn but this.
 The best things thou hast found or dream'd—



"SHE DID NOT SPEAK, SHE DID NOT LOOK ;
AS IN A TRANCE THE CAP SHE TOOK."

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Howso they new and special seem'd,
 Most intimately thine,—are part
 Of Man's inheritance; thou art
 Co-heir with many. That bright Road,
 Where only winged Fancy trode,
 Stretch'd on the wave by moon or sun,
 For each that saw, appear'd to run
 Directly to the gazer's feet,—
 Which was not thus, and yet no cheat;
 And if a radiancy divine
 Doth straight into thy spirit shine,
 Lo, it is thine—not singly thine.
 The wondrous light that shone to thee
 A child, the children saw, and see;
 And Love's wide-spread celestial glow
 To each peculiarly doth flow.
 If thou hast been a lover, so
 These loved in bye-gone days.

Befell

One spring-day, from the circling mound,
 Where her Sun-chamber builded well
 Look'd wide on all the prospect round,
 Princess Mervaunee watch'd the sea,—
 Her two young sons beside her knee.
 Her solemn eyes of changeful blue
 Larger, it seem'd, and darker grew,
 And mournful as they never were
 Till now. The children gazed on her,
 With awe of that strange mournfulness,
 The sense whereof they might not guess.
 But youth still turns to thoughts of joy,
 And quickly spake the younger Boy,
 "O Mother! would we had a boat
 Upon these merry waves afloat,
 To sail away and leave the land!"
 The elder Brother shouted—"I
 Would dive beneath the waves, and spy
 Who live there!"

Nothing did she say,
 But stared upon them, seized a hand
 Of each, and hurried them away.
 Then, to her husband, "Grant me grace!"
 She said, "and take me from this place!
 The moaning restless water kills
 All peace within me, day or night,

And soon will be my death outright ;
Take me to inland woods and hills.
I love the quiet grassy earth,
Calm lakes, tree-shadows, wild birds' mirth,
I hate this heaving watery floor,
Its ceaseless voices, more and more.
Take me away !—O love, forgive !"
He marvell'd ; but he loved her best
Of all things, and on this behest
Sought out an inland place to live.

Amid the hills, wide-forested,
With rocky pastures interspread,
The sky is in a placid lake,
Steep-shored, transparent-water'd, lonely,—
A bed of reeds at one place only,
'Twixt the water and the brake.
There, driving many an oaken stake
Into the shallow, skilful hands
A steadfast island-dwelling make,
Seen from the hill-tops like a fleet
Of wattled houses ; beams of oak
Fix them ; and soon a light-blue smoke
Goes up across the crowd of trees,
Where greening Spring is busy anew,
Dark holly intermixt, and yew,
And here and there a hoary rock.

The wolf, the wild-cat, and the bear
Prowl'd in these woods or made their lair ;
Strange yells at midnight came, or oft
At dead of night,—while safe and soft
Within their Island-Houses slept,
On rushy mat and woollen cloak
And fur of beast, the Prince's folk,
Save who in turn the nightwatch kept ;
The Prince himself, and Mervanee,
And two brave Boys, where they should be ;
While, underneath, the ripple crept,
And morning rose behind the hills.

There bide they while the Spring refills
Earth's cup with life-wine to the brink,
And every creature joys to drink.
They fish'd, they hunted, ranged afar
Through labyrinthine woods, made war
On catamount and cruel wolf ;
And, three times, Dalimar himself
Spear-smote the spreading-antler'd elk

And dash'd to ground his mighty bulk.
 They drove the milky kine to feed
 In forest lawn and marshy mead,
 Or swam their wolf-hounds, pure of breed,
 Or hollow'd the tree-trunk for canoe,
 Made nets and lines, and bows of yew,
 Goblets, and other things of wood
 For a hundred uses good,
 Nor bare of carving. Mervanee,
 Span with her tall handmaidens three,
 Taught her sons whate'er she could,
 Tended the household well, prepared
 The evening feast which all folk shared ;
 Then gladly heard the minstrel sing
 His tales, or touch'd herself the string
 (But seldom this) to music strange
 Floating through many a subtle change.
 Thus fled the summertime away.

" Art thou at peace?" he said one day,
 Kissing her lips. " O Dalimar!
 Lovest me yet? Thou dost, I know,
 But still I'd have thee tell me so!"
 " I loved thee first ten years ago ;
 And now I love thee better far.
 Nay, thou hast kept thy bloom of youth
 All perfect."

" Dalimar, in sooth,
 There is my sorrow! I can see
 A touch or two of time on thee,
 Dearer for this,—but—may thy wife
 Now tell thee somewhat of the life
 Of those beneath the waves, and teach
 What I have always shunn'd in speech,
 Nay shunn'd in thought?—but year by year
 Brings the inevitable near.

" In those vast kingdoms under sea,
 Dusky at noontide, few there be
 Of mine, a magic race, that dwell,
 And how we came there none can tell,
 Imperial mid the monstrous forms
 Of Ocean's creeping, gliding swarms ;
 We live three hundred years or more,
 Three hundred years, and sometimes four,
 And then—ah misery!—and then—

" I said, it is not so with men
 Of that bright Upper World, who breathe

Crystalline ether, live beneath
 The great dominion of the Sun
 And Starry Night—(O Night with Stars!).
 Sure nothing there, I said, debars
 Or daunts them, be it life or death,
 In their Infinity begun,
 Inspired with such transcendent breath!

“Fearful our visits, short and rare
 To your unbounded World of Air,
 By an old secret, told to few,
 And perilous of proof. I knew
 The danger, but I loved it too;
 And sometimes, good or evil hap,
 Would even doff that precious Cap
 Which all beneath the sea must wear,
 Because I thus felt greater share
 Of earth-life, an unwonted sense
 Of fearful hope and joy intense
 Commingling,—seem’d almost to rise
 And float immortal through those skies
 Without a limit.

“I have proved
 Earth’s life and love, through thee, Belov’d,
 And through thee, happy. Former days
 Withdrew into a distant haze;
 First I had Thee, then twofold bliss,
 And threefold: better lot than this
 Heart could not dream of—might it stay.

“It smote me suddenly one day,
 Like arrow from an unseen bow,
 A poison’d arrow—He must go,
 And thou remain! He shall wax old
 Ere fifth part of thy life be told,
 And die, and leave thee desolate,
 With all the endless years to wait!
 My sons too—’tis not death I fear;
 If we all die, then death is dear;
 But long sad lonely life. O Sea,
 At least thou hast a death for me!
 Nay, husband, kiss me, clasp me tight,
 Albeit I lack the human right
 Of growing old along with thee!”

She wept; he sooth’d her as he could,
 And cheer’d her to a brighter mood.
 But grief came shadowing back; and when

Dark autumn gain'd on wood and fen
She felt the moaning of the trees
Was worse to suffer than the sea's.
"It taunts us with the distant shore—
Return we!"

They return'd. Once more
The salt gale stirr'd her robes and hair,
But could not breathe away her care;
The trouble grew, the sad unrest,
And most of all when moony nights
Whiten'd the surf, or spread afar
On lonely tracts of sea. His best
Of comforting tried Dalimar;
Beyond the hour availing nought.
For in their lives a change was wrought.

One dreary afternoon, while She
Sat gazing on the doleful sea,
She saw her Husband by her stand,
The Cap of Magic in his hand,
His face was ashy, his voice low
And hollow, and his words came slow:
"My strange dear Lady of the Sea,
If thou hast mind to part from me
And live no longer on the land,
Take this, and let thy choice be free."
She did not speak, she did not look;
As in a trance the Cap she took.
At its touch a tremor shook
Suddenly through her, from head to feet,
And back she lay in the carven seat,
With staring eyes and visage wan,
As though she were at point to die;
Then started up with sudden cry—
"O Dalimar!"—but he was gone.

And none saw her go; nor found trace;
Nor henceforth look'd upon her face.
From that hour, empty was her place.

On a winter night, when the fire burn'd bright,
After flocks of years had flown away,
Voiceful O'Kennedy sung his lay,
And his yearning harp was tuned aright
For ripples of music that keep afloat
The little tale like a gliding boat:

"Who will hearken to harp and rhyme,
Of things that befell in olden time?"

"For one more voyage Prince Dalimar sail'd ;
His two bold sons in the ship with him ;
Though his beard was white, and his eyesight dim,
And his strength was fail'd.
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"Weary was he with endless quest
By watery way and island bay ;
Never seeing by night or day
One he loved best.
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"For he had wedded a fairy wife,
And she had left him, he knew not why,
And till he could find her he would not die,
Though sad was life.
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"A sunset over mid-ocean spread,
Where the ship, becalm'd, did gently sway ;
And there on deck Prince Dalimar lay,
As well-nigh dead.
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"Closed were his eyes, and pallid his face,
His sons and his sailors standing round ;
They thought 'He is far from the burial-mound
Of his chieftain-race.'
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"But he opens his eyes, he lifts his hands,
Like one who sees some wonderful sight ;
He raises himself, his eyes grow bright ;
Straight up he stands !
(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"He sighs, 'Long-while have I lived alone.'
He smiles, 'It is Thou !' and then, with one leap
Into the heave of the glassy deep,

Sinks like a stone.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

' Swifter than cormorants plunged the men,
Rose for breath, and dived anew ;
But they swam to the ship when dark it grew,
All silent then.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

" Voyaging homewards, often a gleam
Encompass'd the vessel, and with the light
A waft of music. One still midnight
There came a Dream.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

"At full moon, full tide,—to each Brother the same :
His Father and Mother, hand in hand,
Immortally fair, beside him stand,
And speak his name.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

" Seeming out of the water to rise,
Enclosed in a radiant atmosphere,
And to float aloft, and disappear
Into the skies.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

" The ship sail'd fast in the morning sun
By point and cave, as the fair wind blew,
And into a little port she knew,
And her voyage was done.

(Hush a little for harp and rhyme :
This befell in the olden time.)

" Where the mounded Rath overlooks the sea
The Pillar-Stone is a beacon afar ;
Graven in ogham, ' DALIMAR—
MERSAUNEE.'

(This was all in the olden time ;
And here is the end of harp and rhyme.)"

But this too is a bygone song.
The Rath has been for ages long
A grassy hill; the Standing-stone
Looks on a country bare and lone,
And lonelier billows,—half a word
Of ogham at the edge, all blurr'd
With crust of lichens yellow and gray.
There you may sit of a summer day,
And watch the white foam rise and fall
On rampart cliffs of Donegal,
And the wild sheep on the greensward stray,
And the sea-line sparkle far away.

THE END.



"WE MUST GO TO DINNER AT ONCE," HE SAID.

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